



# 당신과 나의 어사일럼

은사자의 우리

I

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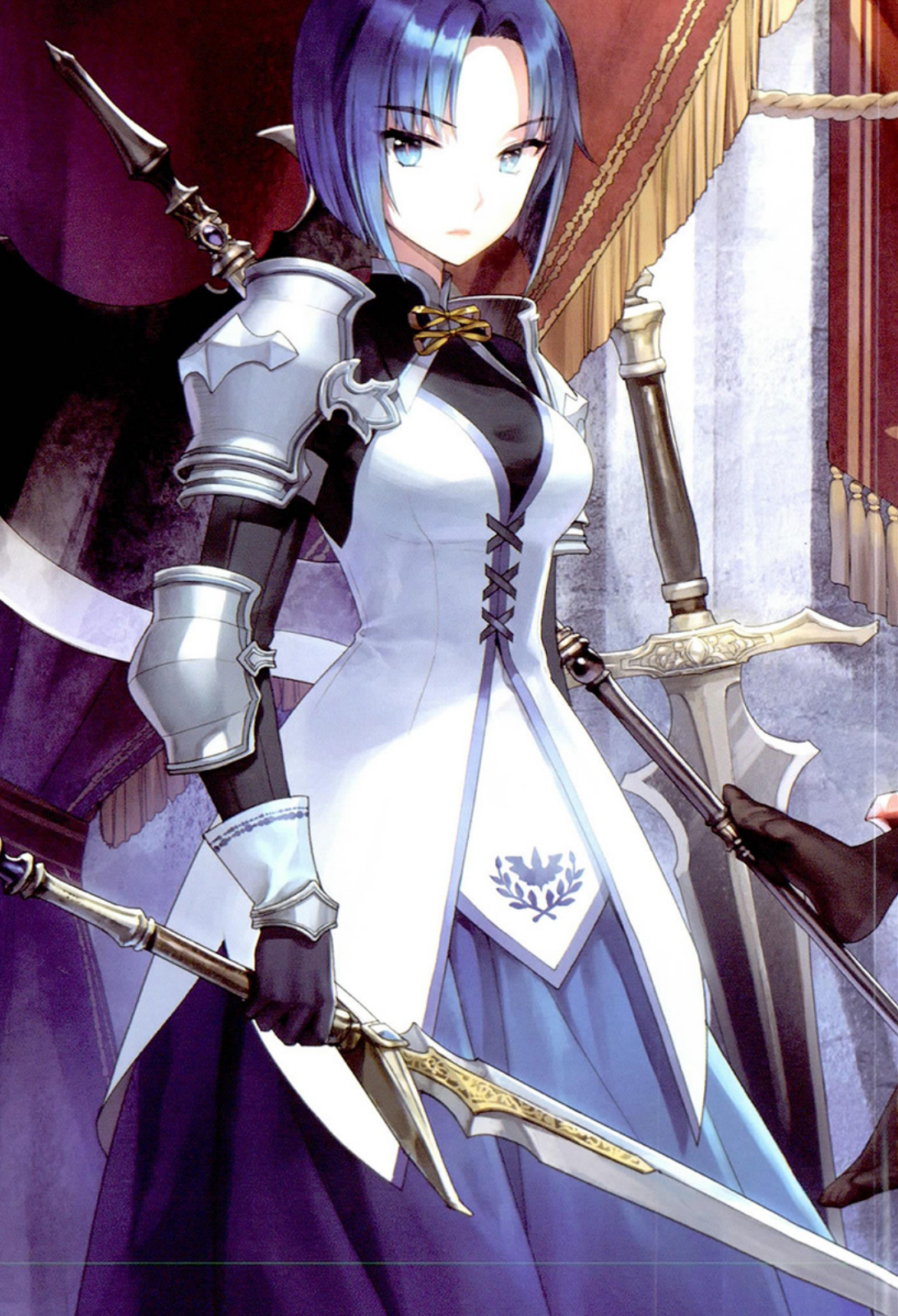












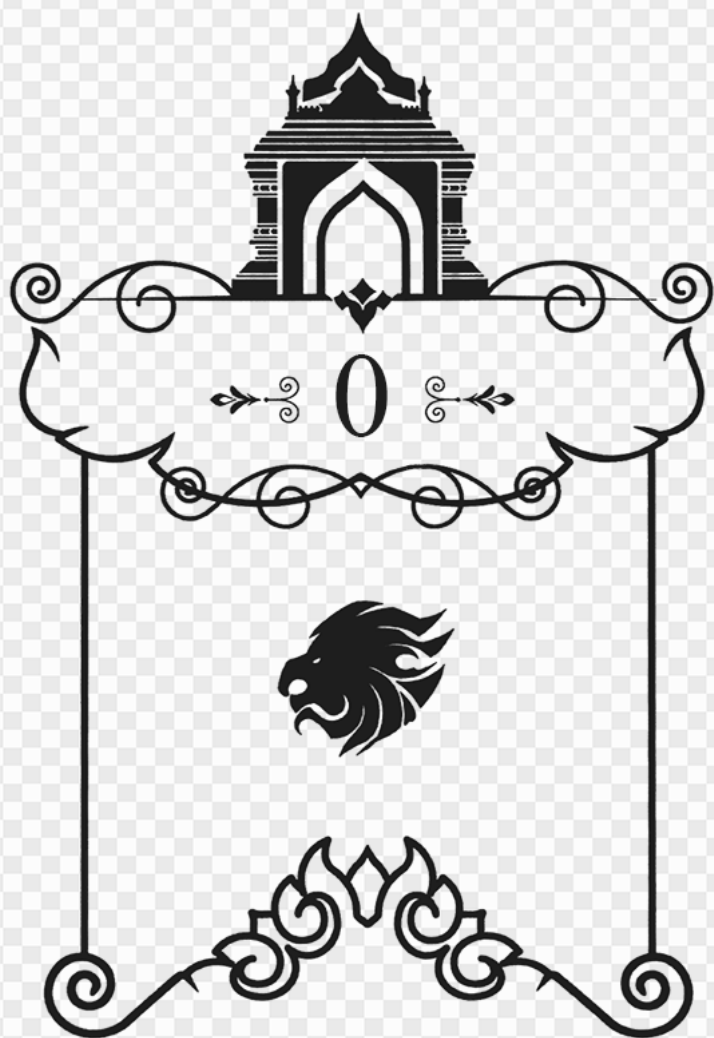


I tell me, myself, that you are necessary to me.  
I tell you, yourself, that I am necessary to you.  
You tell you, yourself, that I am necessary to you.  
You tell me, myself, that I am necessary to you.  
I towards you, yourself, I towards me, myself,  
you towards you, yourself, and you towards me,  
myself, we spoke.

We said it.

*And fear arrived.*



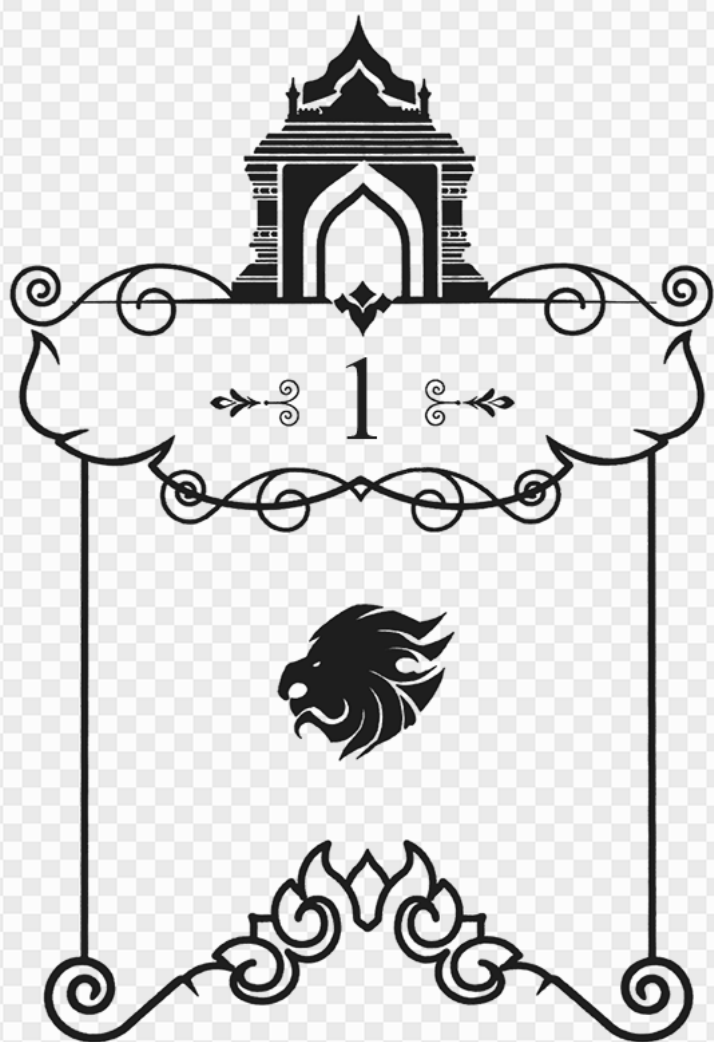




I am not wounded by anything and I do not feel pain from anything. I am too broken to be able to do so. Like a log one day meeting a waterfall and plummeting, I am a human that will vanish after wandering around aimlessly.

I did not hope for anything more than that and believed that I could not go back again.





I opened my eyes. The stench of mold pierced my nose.

I coughed once and looked at my surroundings. A confined space composed of stone walls covered in moisture. Excluding the iron door placed in front of me, nothing else existed. The thought of this room being similar to a solitary confinement cell brushed through my thoughts. If that were so, then ten to one, this was most likely a solitary cell.

The smell of mold.

Although it felt as if there were a large pile of things that I could question, inquiries such as ‘Where is this?’ were not important. What could I do with such information? It was meaningless. The crucial things were ‘Why was I brought here?’, ‘How was I brought here?’, and ‘What am I going to do from now on?’.

While touching the prayer beads on my wrist, I recalled the previous day.

There was nothing in particular that happened. Even after the New Years had passed, I woke up at around 5 o’clock again, washed up, took a shower after going out for a light jog, made breakfast, ate together with my uncle, my aunt, and my younger cousin Miyeong, and washed the dishes afterward. I went to cram school next. Since I was going to be entering into my third year of high school once this winter break was over, I had engrossed myself into studying. In the afternoon, I went to the hospital and visited Minhee. Afterward, I returned home and exercised for about another hour. After cleaning up inside the house, I prepared dinner and ate with my aunt and Miyeong first. I then washed the dishes, returned to my room to do my homework, and around the time I finished washing up, my uncle came home from work, so I made dinner for him and washed the dishes again. Once I finished doing so, it was 10 o’clock, so I studied until 12 and went to sleep.

And when I opened my eyes, I was like this. Feeling distraught, I thought while touching my beads.

I checked my attire. All I had on was the sleepwear I would change into before going to sleep and the prayer beads I would always wear on my right wrist. The glasses I placed next to my head while I slept were gone.



Although I was able to find my smartphone after going through my pockets, the out of range icon was being displayed.

Therefore.....no matter how much I wracked my brain, I could only conclude that I had been kidnapped and confined in a mold-filled solitary cell where both light and radio signals couldn't enter. No, this was worse than a solitary cell. There wasn't even a toilet here.

“Is that you, Chanmi?”

The leader of the bullies that had tormented me—the esteemed daughter of the Joo Group conglomerate—I called out Joo Chanmi's name and gazed around. “Give it up. We settled things a year ago, didn't we? Doing something like this now will only be disgraceful for you.”

There was no need to feign composure. I have constantly been calm ever since Minhee was admitted to the hospital.

“You probably wouldn't understand even if I told you this was a crime. Regardless, I thought you would at least have some self-respect, but did you not even have that?”

The trigger to me being bullied was trivial. Though the motive behind my resolve to break away from that torment was not trivial, separate from that praiseworthy time, the method I used to break free from the bullying couldn't be anything more than something minor. I had fragmentized Chanmi's clique and raised up my own faction. If you looked at it calmly, the struggle was like a type of chess, janggi, or Go. It was irrefutably a board game, and in the end, my clique had overpowered Chanmi's faction—winning by a narrow margin.

So that ‘8 Years' War' should have been settled 1 year ago during the scorching 18th summer of my life.

“I'm disappointed. Or is it because my finish wasn't proper?”

There were no other methods to explain this situation. It would be different if I had been hit in the back of the head while walking the streets, but to be able to abduct a person who was sleeping in their bed and house, and to construct something similar to a solitary cell like this, these things

were only possible by someone who possessed a considerable amount of wealth and manpower, and among those people who possessed all that, the only fellow who had an ill-fated relationship with me was Chanmi.

“Joo Chanmi.”

I stood up. This enclosed space was packed whether I stood or laid down. Though if my older cousin, who is currently working for the government, were here, she could most likely accurately measure the size of this space. Relying on my own eyes to make an approximate measurement of the room, the width and height seemed to be both around 2 meters. A putrid smell of mold.

Since I couldn't find anything no matter how much I looked around my surroundings, I approached the door. A heavy door made with some black material with an unmoving handle attached to it. I tried placing both of my arms against the door and pushing, but it didn't show any signs of opening. I gave up my pointless effort and decided to gaze at the door more carefully……. I then discovered it.

There was a hole around 1 meter and 50 centimeters from the bottom of the door. It was a hole that was made for the purpose of taking a peek outside. Since I was 175 centimeters tall, I had to bend my back in order to look through it. I contemplated for a moment. However, since there were no other methods, I lowered myself and peered through the hole.

And then, I met someone's eye.



The first half. I was bullied normally for 4 years. The latter half. I fought back for 4 years. Aftermath. The amount of time I spent as the victor was barely over 1 year. As I had spent my time managing the embers at school and being shoved around at home, it was an amount of time that wasn't even remotely enough to forget my survival instincts. The ability to read the flow of emotion and atmosphere of another person was still functioning within me. The eye that met my gaze, according to my judgment was—.



First, it was a silvery gray that felt as if it could abolish darkness despite being similar to the thickness of snow that had been stepped on and crushed.

In the center of that, a certain rupture was situated there.

After that, even when our eyes had met, there was no occasion of their eye flinching or blinking.

And as if something were funny—it was smiling.

“....., ....., .....”

Strength went into my hand that was holding the prayer beads. *Press*. As if I were trying to crack it, I pressed down onto the beads. I was barely able to regain my composure again after pressing down on one bead at a time. It's fine. It's fine it's fine it's fine. Be calm. Calm down, me. Think about it. [Yujin, ain't your head really good?]<sup>[1]</sup> That's right. Since I have a good head, I need to think calmly whenever and wherever I am.

“Who?”

I asked quietly. Gray eyes? This is the first time I've ever seen them.

“Do you have any relations with Chanmi?”

A foreigner? If it isn't an incredibly diluted shade of blue, it's difficult for pupils to be that kind of silver. Therefore, the base color has to be blue, meaning they're probably a foreigner. Did Chanmi hire a foreigner? Although nothing is impossible for her, isn't that too much of a jump? It was at the moment I thought that.

The other party started to laugh.

Ah hah. A strange laugh. Ah hah hah hah ha. An unnatural sound that required one to move their tongue on purpose in order to make, and yet, it sounded as if they were truly enjoying the situation. Ah ha, ah ha ha ha ha, ah hah ha..... The eye on the other side of the door hole was trembling slightly. The pupils weren't shaking, but the head movement made them appear as if they were. The eyes themselves, without even the slightest sign of wavering, were still smiling.

Without a word, I waited for the laughter to stop. While the transparent plasticity flowed by, the stench of mold invaded my nose. A dreadful smell. Eventually, the laughter stopped, but the scent that felt as if it had become agitated by the noise did not go anywhere.

The other party spoke.

“Chanmi? Who’s thaaat?”

It was a girl. It was a young voice that had yet to break (Girls experience something similar to voice breaking as boys do). Somehow her awkward pronunciation further pointed towards my assumption that she was a foreigner. Additionally, I became certain of another fact. It was my first time hearing this voice.

“Who are you?”

It wasn’t until then that my voice had changed. I didn’t lose my composure, but it did sink down further.

“Are you talking about me? Are you curious ?” On the other hand, her voice carried more spirit. The sound of laughter reverberated once more. “Okay. I’ll teach youuu—.”

Her eye drew away from the hole, but since the field of vision was already too narrow, I could barely see anything further out.

“Now then. I. Am.”

‘Look forward to it!’, it felt as if her body was uttering that as she spread her shoulders. The sight of the edge of her clothes rising up and going down entered my vision once before disappearing.

“The First Sky Reacher of the 12 Sky Reachers, the deepest sky!!”

The fluttering edges of her clothes appeared in my field of vision occasionally before vanishing once more. It was either a skirt or a robe. In any case, she was wearing ample clothing.

“Although it would be good to refer to me as ‘The Gate of Simla(The Lost

Gate)', I am the one everyone refers to as 'The Universal Summoner(Princess : Featly)'-!!"

It felt as if she had taken the pose of pressing her hand against her forehead while shouting 'How discourteous!', but I was unable to see it.

"The mage and lord of the City of Confinement(The Asylum)!! I am the Earl of the Silver Lion-       !!"

It was a relief that the door was closed. If it were open, then my eardrums would have shook. While I was thinking so, the self-proclaimed First Sky Reacher of the 12 Sky Reachers, Universal Summoner, Earl of the Silver Lion's eye appeared at the other side of the hole once more. Seeing as there was a loud thud, it seems she had headbutted the door.

"And the reason why you're here, that's because! I! Summoned you with a bang—!! Since, my specialty is summoning!" Her eye moved away for a moment before with another **Thud!** it quickly drew near again, accompanied by the small shaking of the door. "How's that? Has your curiosity been sated—? Ah hah hah hah ha ha ha.....!!"

Yeah, I understand well that you're a lunatic. I thought.



Putting aside the cackling Earl of the Silver Lion(Self-proclaimed), I reviewed the facts I was able to gather.

First, I was kidnapped.

Second, it seems the kidnapper is the fellow across the door, and she's a girl that I have never seen before.

Third, the kidnapper is someone who attaches ridiculous nicknames to herself such as 'mage and lord' and 'Universal Summoner', so a lunatic who's suffering from a chronic disease known as chuunibyou, like Eunji or Hanjeun.

Fourth, although it's a mystery on what this girl plans to do with me, be it



this iron door and solitary cell..... this has long past the border of a crime that could be alleviated by simply saying 'I'm sorry, my jokes went a bit too far, ehe'.

I rotated my prayer beads.

'Don't mess with me!', getting angry like that would be easy. 'What do you think you're doing!?', shouting out is simple as well. However, what would change if one were to do so? I'm the one that is currently being confined. The fact that one should avoid behaving rashly until they are able to discover what the other party's intentions are, this is something so obvious that I didn't have to recall the '8 Years' War' with Chanmi to know. I spoke in a voice that wouldn't invoke irritation.

"I'm Han Yujin. As you can see, I'm a male and I'll be entering my third year of high school soon. I'll be turning 19 this year."

No matter how ridiculous the other party's words may have been, you must respond appropriately. You have to introduce yourself. If you wish to implant the fact that you possess a 'life that you have lived up till now' and that you are a 'human being' into the other party, then this is one of the best methods of doing so. If you were to fail in making the other party be aware of these facts, then they will not consider you as an equal human being-and-they will do severe things to you without possessing even the slightest bit of a guilty conscience. The reason why the Nazis were able to slaughter the Jews was because the Jews were not considered as 'equal human beings' to them.

"I like green tea, injeolmi, and classic music. I don't like anything that gives too much stimulus."

In this situation, discovering that the other party is younger than you is never a good variable. I have yet to forget the incident involving a person named Shin Eunji-the person who declared that, as the black angel of the Choir of Alcania, they possessed 7 different personalities and each personality had their own respective special ability(For some reason the names of each personality were in Japanese). The fact that these type of people do not mature, that it is nearly impossible to reason with them, that they lack a tremendous amount of self-restraint in their actions, and that just these characteristics alone could make an individual terrifying, this was

something that had been engraved into my bones.

“So, Miss Earl of the Silver Lion, with what purpose did you summon me for?”

The Earl blinked her eyes. Quickly after, her smile returned.

“Ah hah ha ah. Mm. Aren’t you incredibly caaalm?”

“Is that surprising?”

“Nooope!! Well, it’s within expectations. Within it.” She spoke after chuckling once, “Something like trying to use your head to think up petty tricks. I can see it cleearly.”

“That’s rude. I’m not turning my head to think up petty tricks.”

“Then are you turning your head to make white hair?”

“Though I don’t have any.”

Since the situation is like this, it feels like some might actually come out.

In any case, she’s wrong. I’m really not trying to conjure up ‘petty tricks’. I’m merely using all of my human capabilities to utilize my entire head. (Is she really not related to Joo Chanmi?) (But there’s still a good chance that she’s a foreigner who was hired by Chanmi) (Then is that lunatic-like behavior of hers an act?) (Or is she the esteemed daughter of some CEO of a foreign company and decided to kidnap me because she’s a maniac in a degree that doesn’t fall behind Chanmi?) (In any case, there’s a reason why she kidnapped me.) (If that’s so, then what was it?)

“Anyway, why did you summon me? There should be a reason.”

(Do you not require a reason since you’re a madman?) (That’s doubtful. The fact that I was ‘chosen’ meant that this chuunibyou was interested in something about me.) (Look back at myself) (I’ll be 19-years-old this year. A normal boy.) (My eyesight became weaker so I wear glasses.) (Although I don’t have my glasses right now.) (I’m confident about my intellect.) (Of course, I’m proud of my ability to be calm as well.) (However, I have never been conceited.) (No matter how much I think about it, I can’t figure out a

reason.) <If it's like this, then should I confirm it with her?>

-Going along with her pace-.

“Do I perhaps have the blood of a hero that's destined to save this world?”

“Pbبت...!?” I wanted to retort that a child shouldn't make such a crude sound. “Eub. Ehem. Mm. Was that a joke? Or legit? Either way, bzbt! Nope. Wrong answer!”

I succeeded in receiving a response. Then all I can do is continue asking.

“Then what is it? Do I have to get married to you?”

“Pfft? Pbبت. That's not it! Ah hah hah hah ha. You really are interesting.”

If it isn't summoning a hero or a lover, then among the other chuunibyouto-like settings there is only one left. Since their nickname seems to also go along with that setting, then maybe this is it.

“Then am I supposed to be some familiar? Go easy on me, I have to get ready for the SAT later this year.”

“Familiar? Mm. Now you're getting a bit closer..... But bzbt! Absolutely bzbt! It's not something stupid like that, *Kuzato-Rospiante!!*”

The girl uttered some other world language and started chuckling. She then suddenly spread her shoulders as if stretching out her body.

“The answer!”

Bang! She hit the door.

“A toy to be tortured!”

**Bang!** She hit the door again.

“From now on, you will be tortured!! Now then, now then. I'll stab a fork underneath your nail and BAM! raise it using a level principle. I'll use a nail

clipper and clipclipclipclip your eyelids off. I'll grab a pair of scissors and slightly slightly slightly slightly cut off your lips! Aah, but it's okay! Don't worry, since I won't penetrate your brain when I stab, stab, stab chopsticks into your ears! Why? Mm, the reason is. If I do something like that, then in an instant, woooooosh, in an instaaant."

BANG!! I wonder if she had hit the door with her palm, as the entire door had shaken.

"You'll diiiiee, ah hah ha ha!! I won't kill you immediately. That's why it'sokayit'sokay. Worries ZERO!"

The girl cried out while pounding the door. There were two thoughts that crossed my mind while I rotated my prayer beads. That this fellow really has high tension<sup>[2]</sup>.....

And.

This situation is far more dangerous than I originally thought.



"I understand what you plan to do with me now."

I did not scorn the other party. I made sure the other party didn't feel as if they were being looked down upon. Therefore, I didn't speak sarcastically. Always treating them as a proper human being. Even while I was behaving like that, I did not put an insincere smile on my face. Using a tone that didn't aggravate the other party, I spoke calmly like how the winner of the '8 Years' War' should behave.

"But could you stop hitting the door? Your hand must hurt."

"Pbbt? Eub. Ah hah hah ha hang. Still with the petty tricks-? Normally, people who end up in this kind of situation fall into despair, start crying, or get mad, you know? Ooh. Maybe, you think this is a joke? Do you think this is something like a candid cameraaa?"



“I don’t.” Since this situation had already crossed the line of possibly being a candid camera a long time ago. “Also, if a young girl lets out such an undignified laugh, then people would start to suspect her class, Miss Earl of the Silver Lion.”

The silver pupil of the Earl, who had stopped moving for a moment, glistened. I continued speaking before her smile could return to her eyes.

“Only half was done.”

“Hmm? What, do you mean?”

“The answer. I asked ‘why’ ‘you summoned’ ‘me’. I’m grateful that you explained the reason behind the ‘why’ and ‘summon’, but why did it have to be ‘me’? Is there a special reason?”

“Ah, tha-aats.”

The smile in her eye deepened. This response, if I look back at the patterns up till now.

“Are you perhaps trying to tell me that I was chosen by random?”

Twitch. The Earl let out a ‘Mm—’ sound.

“Koreans, shouldn’t have had the ability to read minds.”

Oi, to be able to know that I’m Korean even though you said I was summoned. That’s quite the convenient setting, that chuunibyoo of yours.

Anyway, it seems I was on the mark. If you put aside the chuunibyoo like setting, then that means I was the one selected when the order ‘Capture anyone’ was given to her subordinates(whether they moved by money or authority). Similar to those urban crimes of female students being kidnapped by vans in alleyways, I unluckily ended up being a target of one of those ‘indiscriminate acts of evil’.

However, if that were so, then there’s still one fact that I can’t understand. I was sleeping in my home, in my room, and in my bed. Even if it was that kind of indiscriminate kidnapping, isn’t invading a random person’s home too high of a risk? I’ll put off that thought for now.

“But why are you trying to torture me?”

“Are you curious?”

“Yeah. Is it similar to the feeling of kicking a dog?”

“Mm, well, something like that……. There’s a lot, a lo~t of annoying things piled up. Ehem. I need someone to vent it out on.”

“Aren’t you an earl? You can just torture your subjects.”

‘This idiot!’, the Earl of the Silver Lion shouted and pounded the door powerfully. After doing so, I could hear the sound of her hopping around as if she were in pain.

“Uu~ my hand. Mmm. There’ll be problems if I torture the people of my world. That’s why, *Mongado*, accordingly!”

“Accordingly?”

“Isn’t tormenting otherworldly beings from completely different worlds! More! Rational!?”

Truly, it’s things outside the border.

Doing harm means to do harm to the offender as well. The most classic, and yet effective, method of shielding oneself against that reflective damage is the controversy I mentioned earlier between the Nazis and the Jews. Thus, ‘the border’. After having drawn a line, you can prevent any type of empathy by declaring that you and the people in question are completely different beings. I now understood what this self-proclaimed ‘Earl of the Silver Lion’ meant when they were calling me her ‘summon’. Since I’m a summoned otherworldly being from another world, by declaring it as so, she is able to obtain a psychological immunity……. That’s what she’s probably trying to say.

Whatever it was, the essence was something insignificant.

“Are you going to do it immediately?”

“Yuup♪”

An immediate response. I really got caught by a bad person.

“How? Are you going to open the door and come in? I’m not bound, you know?”

“Hmm? Do you intend to, resist?”

“That’s obvious…… since you said you’re going to torture me. Or do you plan to use magic so I can’t move?”

Is she going to use sleeping gas or shoot me with a stun gun? If that’s the case, then this hole I’m looking through may be dangerous. Who knows when something sharp could pierce through it. For starters, I backed away from the hole and pushed my back against the wall. However, the Earl spoke up in a rather flat tone.

“Mm, that’s not it. I, can’t use any spells other than summoning. Furthermore, even that summoning ability—.”

Abruptly, the sense of falling enveloped me.

“Huh?” Without even being able to react, I fell backward just like that. **Thud……!!** “Kuh……!” A sense of impact spread from my bottom, back, and to the back of my head. My field of vision was distorted for a moment before it restored itself. And then, in my recovered field of vision, I no longer saw the ceiling that was 2 meters up…….

It went up a considerable amount, but my sight was now directed towards the ceiling of a hallway?

“Like this, I can only teleport my target directly in front of me. It isn’t like those Korean fantasy novels where a vow of loyalty comes along with it. Disappointing, disappointing.”

And near the feet of my sprawled out body, there was a black-socked foot, I mean, there was a silver-haired girl standing in an imposing manner with her arms crossed.



....., ....., what?

What, happened, just.....now?

I was certainly..... huh..... yeah, I had the door in front of me while I was leaning against the back wall of the cell, right? But why did it suddenly feel like the wall behind me disappeared..... and in the next moment, I was in a hallway. No, to be exact, I was moved to the hallway instantaneously and because that had happened, the wall which I was leaning against was gone, so I fell backwards..... but why? How? Something like that is impossible..... Teleportation? It can't be..... Or maybe that wall was retractable, and this hallway is located past it..... wait, then who's the person I was making eye contact with through the door..... it's her..... it's those eyes..... but..... no, no.

Nononono.

No.

Calm down. Keep it together. [Yujin, ain't your head really good?] Yeah, the [8 Years' War], think about it, thinkthinkthinkthink. Okay. As long as I don't lose my cool-headedness, I can analyze, dig up, and redefine anything. It's not difficult. It's not difficult at all.

Calm yourself down, Yujin.

My composure was just barely able to return as I put more and more strength into my grip on the beads. I raised my head and looked at the girl standing by my feet, the 'Earl of the Silver Lion'.

The first thing that stuck out was that silver bobbed hair. Though normally, when someone mentions the term 'silver hair', then the image of glossy natural hair would come to mind, but her hair was disheveled like a lion's mane. There was a sense of beauty and wit in her beaming eyes, which held silver pupils that harbored darkness. A sharp nose and light scarlet skin. There was a delicate pale pink color, as light as the breath on glass, on her lips. Within those slightly parted lips of hers, there was a misaligned tooth-no, there were protruding canines and a small red tongue swelling like an ember.



Her height was short. Somewhere around 150 centimeters. For some reason, I was certain that she wasn't in the latter years of her teens. Since she had a ring on each and every one of her 10 fingers and a bracelet on both her wrists, she gave off a parvenue-like feeling. Furthermore, the fact that her fingernails were all painted black and that there was a tattoo on the back of both of her hands, boosted that parvenue-like feeling further.

Matching her hair, she was wearing a white ceremonial coat embroidered with golden threads and balls of fluff were attached to the seams and sleeves of her coat. Even the long shirt and skirt that she had on underneath were a matching white color. But for some reason, only her belt and her high socks that reached up to her knees were black. Moreover, for some unknown reason, she wasn't wearing shoes.

Normally, it would be fitting to say that she has a 'western look', but I couldn't recommend that expression. Since every Caucasian girl on Earth could never look like her. No, any girl on Earth most likely couldn't look like her. Especially her eyes-her pupils were different. The sense of difference I felt when I first met her was more obvious now since I was in an open space.

Located in the center of her eye, a scar that looked like something that was formed when smashing a pickaxe into a wall of ice with all your strength-a rupture.

I understood two things.

First, the fact that this fellow and I were absolutely not part of the same 'humankind'.

Second, the fact that this is the same feeling I had when I met Joo Chanmi for the first time-that this is fate, that this will be an ill-fated relationship, this feeling passed by after having left my heart tightly bound.

The Earl of the Silver Lion, while looking down at me, who was in that state, giggled and raised the handkerchief she had in her right hand to cover her mouth.

"Ah ha ah. It's embarrassing if you stare at me so intensely—."

Poof. Everything in front of me changed once more. Rather than my sight, the piercing stench of mold was what informed me that I had returned to the solitary cell. After having experienced this twice, the desire to deny the possibility didn't come up anymore.

"You..... really are a mage."

"Mmm?" Her eye reappeared at the other side of the hole in the door. "What did you think I was?"

"A kid with chuunibyou."

"Ufu, ah, ah hah, ah hah hah ha ha hah ha ha.....!! Uah. Chuunibyou, is it?"

"You understand what it means, Miss 'Earl of the Silver Lion'?"

"I'm generally familiar with the Korean language ♪ I'm, seriously a genius in regards to language, you know?"

".....Hm."

I responded vaguely. The two facts I had to accept were that she could use that summoning ability or whatever and that she wasn't the same type of human being as myself. Any more than that, for example, the claim that this was the 'Confinement City' of another world, Sky Reacher among Sky Reachers blah blah blah..... was something I couldn't believe. How could I?

Then

How

Am I supposed to escape?

Let's stay collected. I thought while holding my prayer beads tightly in my hand. In the first place, if that was the case, then how was she speaking in 'Korean'? A universal 'translation spell'? A 'communication artifact'? Don't mess around. If that's so, then how would it translate terms like 'chuunibyou' and what about those 'another world-like words' that were uttered from time to time? Furthermore, I couldn't understand that foreigner-like pronunciation of hers either. Or perhaps.....

A dark smile appeared in the Earl's eyes as she was watching me.

“Ah hah ha... Anyway, as I told you earlier, although I may be the ‘Universal Summoner’ who’s capable of summoning in front of me any creature from any world, any dimension, and any universe, if you put it into simpler terms, that’s all I can do. Since I can only move them in front of me, they don’t immediately understand the situation and become loyal to me just because I summoned them. Rather, there are more occasions of them trying to resist like crazy, and others try to think up petty tricks like a certain someone.”

‘What a pain!’ she uttered and her eye smoothly moved away from the hole.

“Now then! I’ll ask a question!”

*Step step.* Her footsteps grew distant.

“Did you say your name was Han Yujin? Mm, what do you think I would have to do in order to ‘electrify’ them, make them into a loyal ‘slave’ towards me, and turn them into my own personal ‘pet’?”

As the footsteps went further away, her voice became fainter as well. Despite that, the fact that her voice didn’t completely fade away meant that I was probably that much focused on it. ....And by the time I was able to think that far, I already knew the answer.

“There’s nothing complicated. It’s the same thing that everyone does to everyone.”

This girl’s summoning ability, according to her, is merely moving the position of her target. It can only bring the target before her, but in a state where they don’t understand the reason or the situation and with no mental communion with her.

“The answer is.”

How to tame that kind of opposition?

If you exclude mind control, then there’s only one other option remaining.

“Give them a reasonaaaable…….”

Then that’s perhaps-if this girl really is from another world, the reason why she’s able to use Korean.

“Carrot, and, stick,”

‘And tame them.’

“Thaaaaaaaaaaat’s iiiiiiit!!”

My field of vision changed abruptly once more.



The first thing I felt was a viscous feeling crawling down my respiratory organ and spreading throughout my lungs

The smell of blood.

Things composed of wood and metal that gave off a color that made it difficult for one to differentiate whether it was rust, blood, or its original color

These torture racks.

Far from being collected, these things were not piled up or gathered and were merely left neglected

Skeletons.

Red, green, yellow, and pink sludge mixed together

Flesh and internal organs.

And the group of bound sacrificial lambs that were still alive.

Along with a girl, who was laughing maniacally while looking up towards the ceiling with both of her knees slightly bent, standing beside me. These



things entered my sight.

“Ah hah ha ha ha ha ha ha ha! Ah hah, ah hah ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!!”

The girl walked with heavy steps and with the rod she was holding in her left-hand-*Smack*, she struck a frog-like creature bound to a rack that appeared like an operating table.

“Now then. What kind of frog, is this frog? It’s about 3 meters. But despite its appearance, this was once a brave warrior of the sea! A citizen of an underwater world, an intelligent life form!! *Ezantel*!! Though, now only the area above its waist remains since I ripped the frog apart bit by bit by bit by bit by bit starting from its toes! Hii—Haa! How much longer can it stay alive? We can only wait and see, right? Ah hah ha ah.”

And once more, she struck the frog-like creature on the back. It groaned. “K-toro-kuku-Rra!” The frog uttered something while it twisted its body. That’s right, it ‘said’ something……. I could tell by intuition. Albeit, I couldn’t understand the context of its words, it let out such a ‘refined’ cry that it made my blood freeze. However, the Earl of the Silver Lion giggled and whispered into the frog’s ear, “Sitoros-brrrr-Kadal-PeArto.”. The frog stopped struggling and became docile.

The Earl took two steps forward. Once she did so she stroked a being that was different from the humans on Earth and with an appearance which was different than the Earl herself…… a winged being that looked mostly human. There was a countless number of apparatus and hoses attached to that being who was being restrained to a steel chair.

“Now, on the other hand, this is an angel that was born in the world of heavens! Ah, but this ‘world of heavens’ most likely has nothing to do with what the people of your world refer to as Eden or Valhallaaaa!! I think she said something about originally being a certain angel from a certain tier, but now she’s merely a dairy cattle! A milk producing maaachine! Would you like a glass? Of course, the upper milk! You won’t regret it! It’s so—delicious that you’ll get addicted!! Truly, popularity MAX! The milk from the heavens is the greatest in all of the uniiiiiverse!!”

I could feel my breathing becoming faster despite the fact that I was gripping my prayer beads. The scenery spread out before me was that

dreadful.

The winged being couldn't even protest. It didn't feel like it was because of the hose that was stuffed into its mouth. Him-her? It had both so I wasn't sure what to call it. In any case, the light in the angel's eyes had faded like an old coin. The Earl chuckled and started to walk again.....

“Stop.”

Nausea, queasiness, and a sickening feeling in my gut that felt as if I had gulped down a glass of sewer water, made my vision feel blurry.

“Stop it.”

The ‘Earl of the Silver Lion’..... let out a ‘Mm?’ sound and gazed at me. Looking straight into those eyes, I spoke, one more time.

“I said to stop it. I understand full well that..... you’re speaking the truth.”

“Hmmm..... That’s quite good.”

The Earl cackled and walked towards me with her canine teeth still showing.

“Buuut. There’s one problem..... Why do I have to listen to yooou?”

A reasonable leisure for a person with an overwhelming superiority. Although my barely maintained composure was blabbering about my chances of victory if I were to charge at her right this instant since I wasn't restrained, the intuition I gained after having experienced an 8-year war with Chanmi was pressing down that option. This person is an individual who has committed acts like this until now, is committing them now, and will continue to do so in the future. The thought that she appears defenseless right now has most likely crossed her mind already, thus meaning, she naturally has a countermeasure. Even if she didn't, I had an assumption.

Just as I expected, the Earl grinned and peered into my eyes.

“Mm? By any chance, is the thought, ‘I’m not tied up, let’s rush at her

and beat her up' going through your head? Ufu, ah hah ha. Of course, the majority of people usually fall into a state of panic when they see this, so they aren't even able to think of that idea, but, you don't seem like you're a part of that 'majority'. Regardless, it's impossible. Absolutely impossible. It's a good idea to give up, you know?"

In regards to height, the Earl had to look up at me, but there was an imposing feeling, as if I were being stepped on, wrapping around my entire body.

"Do you know why? I, can immediately....."

"Summon your royal bodyguards."

She stopped for a second before chuckling.

"Of course. Adding to that, I can always....."

"Return me to the solitary cell?"

A silence fell over us.

The Earl of the Silver Lion tilted her head, slightly. I increased the strength in my grip on my prayer beads.

"You said you could move things in front of you, then you can cancel it as well, right? Meaning the target will return to the place they were at before being summoned. For example, my first summon was from Earth to that cell, my second summon was to the hallway, and then that second summon was canceled so I was returned to the cell."

Right now was also a similar situation. I was summoned from the solitary cell to this torture chamber. If this 'torture chamber summon' is released, then I will immediately return to the solitary cell.

".....How?"

Sharp eyes, which were no longer behaving frivolously or smiling, were directed towards me. I didn't tell her that 'I'm capable of looking at a situation calmly, I can read the atmosphere, I don't get caught up by the <impossibles>, so I'm able to put together the series of events as they occur,

and that by being able to do these things, I'm able to always precisely understand the situation around me'.

"Your turn."

"Ha? What are you..... ah..... mm. Are you telling me to take a guess at your ability now? But..... you're not from the garden world or the world of heavens..... You, aren't you Korean? There shouldn't be any *Sitrodel* abilities like this there..... magic, extraordinary physical abilities, and holy powers shouldn't be generalized in your world."

The girl moved her head around restlessly. I waited silently. She let out a sigh.

"Haa, whatever. You're right. My ability, is like that."

"And by that, that means if you cancel the 'first summon' from my bed to that cell, then you can send me back home."

"Correct. Well, I don't plan on doing so."

Ending that topic there, she abruptly turned her body. As if enjoying the hellish sight around her, she turned not only her body but the subject as well.

"Anyway, back to taming. Of course, there are problems with this method as well. For one— no matter how many traps I set up beforehand— if someone incredibly, tremendously stronger than me— ends up being summoned, then far from taming, I'll probably die, you know? Also, since the majority of other worlds have developed *Sitrodel*..... super powers— they reverse trace their way back even though I canceled their summon..... In truth, I've gotten into big trouble a couple of times because of that..... Well, let's stop talking about those demoralizing tales of failure-!!"

The Earl shook her head side to side. Be it this or that, for the time being, since she's young it seems she's used to straying off topic while talking.

"In conclusion, out of the 12 worlds I can meddle with, I can safely play around with the majority living in 5 of those worlds."

".....And my world is one of those 5?"

“Yup. When was it again? Ah, 8 years ago. Your world-which is called the Spire World here, anyway, when I was randomly summoning an inhabitant from your world, I caught a Korean. I learned Korean from that person. I learned a lot of these and those things and those and these things. And what happened to that Korean…… well, there’ll be no more occasions of ever meeting that person again……In any case, I received a lot of Korea-related catalysts from that person.”

“Catalysts?”

The Earl grinned widely and displayed her left hand. A sense of malice was being emitted from the tattoo of a crustacean on the back of her hand and the black nail polish on her pinky, ring, and middle finger.

“Substances needed for pinpoint summons, target summoning, *Lo-Kisa*. It’s also known as ‘the smallest piece of one’s life’. In other words, dandruff, hair, bodily fluids, or some other thing that’s the size of dust. As long as I have an object with any of those smeared onto it, then I can use it to summon its owner. Also, on those catalysts…… Mm, for example, a coat. It’s not only one person’s piece of life that’s on it.”

I was able to understand what she was trying to say. Be it sweat, hair, dandruff, or something that got rubbed onto it when passing someone by, there will without a doubt be another person’s piece of life, their catalyst, on it as well.

“Like that, pow! I brought in a bystander that was around them. Got used to Korean a bit more, learned this and that from them, then pow, summoned the next bystander. Even that bystander’s bystander pow! Ah ha ah…….” The girl licked her lips. “It was quite easy.”

“And now you’ve come to me?”

“Yuuup. Mr.Yujin. Do you have a problem with that, Mr.Yujin?”

Ever since I became an orphan, an unexplained case of disappearance has never occurred in my surroundings. At the very least, I had a grasp of the entire student body of my schools(Damn 8 Years’ War), and the people I came into contact with outside of school were only my relatives. However, there were no missing cases among them. That means it wasn’t anyone I

knew.

If that's the case..... something like brushing past someone on the subway, through that kind of coincidental act she was able to obtain a piece of my life and summon me.

“What happened..... to those other people?”

“Ah hah ha..... What do you think happened?”

I ended up figuring out the answer before I witnessed her smile while biting her stuck out tongue. In this moment, if I didn't have my prayer beads, then I would have most likely been unable to maintain my composure. Thanks, Cha Minhee.

Moreover, what this girl said towards the frogman a second ago..... I feel like I know what it was. ‘I'll kill you if you struggle?’, that's ridiculous. Half of its body is already gone. It would probably welcome the relief of death. ‘I'll keep tormenting you?’, that's also absurd. ‘I'll send you back if you behave?’, pouring water on gasoline that is already on fire will only lead to an explosion. Yes, the answer is probably..... no, it's most certainly, ‘If you struggle’ ‘your relatives and the people around you’ ‘I'll summon them and do the exact same thing to them.’. Honestly, the last vowel here was probably dragged out with a musical note, heart, or a star-like symbol attached to the end.....ugh.

....., ....., ....., uh, ugh.

Calm down, Yujin.

Though I've done this several times already......

‘This disgusting psychopathic lunatic.’, rebuking her is simple, but what will change? ‘How could you do such a thing? I won't forgive you!’, screaming at her is easy, but what will change?

Nothing.

That's right. Nothing will change if I rely on my emotions. If I try to do that too rashly, then I will ‘no longer’<sup>[3]</sup> be able to do ‘that’. I understood to my core, that the situation would just become much more severe if I were

to do something like that. That's why, don't do it. Be calm. Be cool, Yujin. There is a way. A way to breakthrough must exist.

There was no deep breathing. I was simply gazing at the Earl of the Silver Lion while working my brain as fast as possible.

Okay, think about it seriously.....!!



Organize all the information that has been revealed so far.

First, I was kidnapped(summoned) by a lunatic from another world.

Second, that lunatic knows how to use magic. According to her, she's only capable of summoning and canceling that summon, however, there may actually be more to it than that.

Third, that lunatic is an Earl. This is supposedly a different world, so it may differ with the hierarchy that exists on Earth, but for this mental patient, who's proficient at Korean, to be calling herself an 'Earl'..... then that position must certainly be remarkable.

Fourth, the condition of this other world. Since that psychopath said she was an Earl, then that means politically, this world is either run by feudalism or authoritarian royal power. Though it could also possibly be a constitutional monarch like in modern Britain, where the peerage title is merely a facade, since she said she was the 'lord' of this city, then that's probably not it. Therefore, at least while within this city, she is protected by an overpowering authority and wealth.

Fifth, that nutcase has no intention of sending me back.

Sixth, that maniac intends to turn me into a torture pet.

And finally, once I die after becoming her pet, then by using a 'piece of life' that was on my body, she'll summon another bystander and do the exact same thing to them as she did to me.



Everything was full of despair. Well, ever since I found out that the other party was insane, everything has been going down a path of hopelessness.

Regardless, if there's one thing that was a relief, then it's the fact that a method of returning home most certainly exists. Because if this person decides to let me go, then that'll happen. Though if that were to happen, then certain measures need to also be taken in order to prevent her from summoning me again..... there's no point in thinking that far ahead yet. In the first place, this girl doesn't plan to send me back anyway.

“Now, shall we slowly get started—?”

Far from returning, it's a question whether I'll be able to sustain my life. I clasped the prayer beads tightly.

‘Do you have to?’, no. Cliché lines like this won't even be able to stall for time. ‘Start what?’, should I play innocent? It'd be a question whether she'd even smirk at that. ‘Why?’, that's an absurd question at this point. However, if I keep asking myself like this, then I can at least contemplate for an idea-Yeah, the main reason.

From the start, this girl isn't trying to torture me because she wants something from me.

Just because she's bored.

Merely because she wants to play around.

.....That behavior of hers which can't be understood or forgiven from a normal person's perspective. If anything-it's more of a gap to breach through at this point.

“I can.” I spread my shoulders and spoke. “Entertain you with a different method.”

She reacted with a ‘Hm?’ sound. That's good enough. I didn't expect for it to work from the start anyway.

“Think about it. You should know well if you've played around with other Koreans before. I won't be able to endure for as long as that frog over there, and since I'm a guy, I won't be able to produce milk like that angel.

Moreover, my will is weak so I'll probably die quickly."

"But milk comes from down there too. Are you a eunuch?"

"No, it does come out, but..... are you going to eat it?"

"Eh, no. I don't need it....."

"It doesn't taste good, and a child shouldn't be saying something like that."

Not letting go of my attitude used when dealing with another human being, I spoke to her. The Earl revealed her sharp canines as if she were dissatisfied.

"Korea may be like that, but it's not like that here."

"Is that so? If you allow me the opportunity to learn about this place, then I'll be able to adjust to the customs here."

"Aren't you scheming a bit too much? From the very beginning."

"Yes. But I want to live, and you want amusement."

The Earl showed her canines once more. Silence fell on us like that.

Once that silence felt like it had gone on for awhile, I uttered.

"[Fufu. Just kidding! Uhah, ah hah ha. How was that? Did you think you'd be able to live since I was thinking for a long time? Were you hopeful? How unfortunate! Crushing that kind of foolish hope is more joyful to me than having three square meals a day.], if you plan to say something along those lines, please don't."

"....."

Seeing as she clicked her tongue, it seems she did plan to. During the first half of the 8 Years' War, I properly learned about what false hope was. Though it was something that was forcefully taught to me when I was being bullied by Chanmi's clique.....I guess I haven't become rusty.

“What will you do?”

“.....It’s somewhat, extremely, a bit, annoying, you know—?”

“Probably because you weren’t able to take the initiative..... But isn’t the initiative in a conversation like this not important? You can break down the conversation whenever you want, after all.”

“Hmm. Are you personally saying that? How wiiiise.”

“Don’t think too far into it. I’m saying that you can torture and kill me whenever you want. Literally whenever. If that’s the case, then it’s fine to do it after having entertained yourself a bit more, right? Do you know about the marshmallow story?”

“That’s the manga where a rabbit with an impassive expression on its face appears, right?”

“.....No, not that.”

“Ah. Then is it, the manga where 4 girls and one tall girl appears? The one with an anime as well.”

That’s Strawberry Marshmallow. That’s rather old even on Earth and is a manga that only a certain type of people know. For a person who’s from another world, why is her antenna reaching out towards a weird direction? In that time, just what sorts of Koreans were summoned here?

Ah, should I have taken notice when she understood the term ‘chuunibyō’?

“To keep it simple, if you endure today, then you’ll be able to eat two tomorrow, and if you endure tomorrow as well, then you can have 4 the day after..... Like that.”

“? If it’s food then I have a mountain of it. Do you want some Heaven milk?”

“I won’t drink it so don’t squeeze some out. I said don’t squeeze it. Don’t pass it to me either. I won’t drink it, I said. You drink it.”

“But it’s goooood.”

I let out a sigh. It seems I succeeded in softening the atmosphere. The Earl showed a grin after taking her lips off of her cup.

“Ah hah hah. Mm, Mr. Yujin. So to speak, if I have patience, then I’ll be able to gather that much of an abundant harvest, so I should wait. Is that it? Mr. Yujin.”

“That’s right.”

“And if I don’t want to?”

Silence.

“Juuust. What if you, going through an unimaginable pain, and dying a frustrating death, right now, is something that I want? Mr.Yuuujin.”

I didn’t clench my teeth. In any case, I can conclude that she didn’t feel even the slightest bit of inconvenience towards losing the other party. If you put it in terms of a contract, then her side has the superiority. I’m merely in a position where I’d be grateful just to have my life prolonged. Just because the atmosphere has softened, doesn’t mean that the main issue of the situation has changed. I didn’t delude myself. Even though I didn’t…… I wracked my brain.

‘I guess there’re no other choices then—Do what you want’. I can’t. Normally, I would have lowered my head like this and backed down, but right now, I could smell a trap. ⟨Tsk, I had expectations but was this all you could do? Then I’ll kill you like you wanted.⟩ For some reason, I feel like these words would come out nonchalantly. ‘For pity’s sake, please consider it.’ should I latch onto her? No. I feel like a ⟨I had hopes, but is this it?⟩ kind of reaction would be returned to me and result in my death. Albeit, if someone were to ask why I thought this, then I could only put my gut and mood as a basis. ‘Then that means that’s your limit.’ should I act gallantly? No, that’ll just cast a damper on the situation…… words that wouldn’t spoil the fun…… think, Yujin. Think.

……Eventually.

I said to the Earl the words that came to my head after having worked

my brain to the point where an audible sound of clanking could have possibly been heard.

To be exact, they weren't words.

I knelt down. The Earl tilted her head and let out a sound, "Hm?". As if kowtowing, I lowered my body. Following after, while using hand movements that displayed no hostility, I reached out and held her small ankle.

In this moment, although there was a possibility that the Earl of the Silver Lion would instinctively send me back to the solitary cell, she didn't do so. Though she was startled for a moment, shortly after a look of interest filled her eyes. Thanks to that, without any interference, I brought my face towards the end of her black-socked foot and,



“Mm…….”

For a moment.

“Mm…… That tickles, mm, hm. Ah hah ha ha ha.”

For a moment.

“Mmm……mm. Uuuu—. Aah. Stop. Stop it.”

I drew back. The face of the Earl who was wiggling her toes and looking down at me—was definitely flushed.

“You’re, skilled at this.”

Techniques that I had no other choice but to learn during the first half of the 8 Years’ War. Regardless of how young one is, if they’re taught something while being beaten, then they’ll not only be able to learn it quickly but they won’t be able to forget what they were taught as well.

In any case, I waited momentarily. I’ve passed the ball.

Soon after, the Earl of the Silver Lion, who was crossing her arms with her brow furrowed, let out a sigh.

“……, ……Well, whatever. I’ll overlook you for the moment. No, well, although I’m not sure how long that moment will be. You’ll most likely have to continue proving to me that you’ll be able to amuse me and be useful. If you don’t, then you’ll die immediately……. Ah, jeez.”

After saying that, she grumbled as if she weren’t pleased with something. It can’t be helped since the feeling, ‘I’m going along with his very obvious scheme.’ was most certainly going through her head. Even if that were so,

I survived.

At the very least, I was able to escape the fate of something like immediately being bound to the rack and murdered cruelly. (Please, let us continue the talk tomorrow.), I wonder if the main character of One

Thousand and One Nights, Scheherazade<sup>[4]</sup>, felt like this?

.....Whatever. I will make it back alive.



## Footnotes

1. [\[↑\]](#) The line in the [\[ \]](#) is him recalling a line that someone said to him in the past.
2. [\[↑\]](#) [High Tension](#)
3. [\[↑\]](#) **‘no longer’** and **‘that’** is referring to him ‘no longer’ being able to rely on ‘his emotions’ since he’d be dead.
4. [\[↑\]](#) [Scheherazade](#)
5. Some people may have had a hard time reading some of the Earl’s lines, with all the weirdly placed commas and such, but that’s because she’s talking weirdly. She’s putting emphasizes on certain words and pausing here and there. So please don’t leave comments saying I messed up the grammar for her lines.



My father passed away when I was 10 years old.

It was an accident, or should I call it a mystery? The flight from Kimpo International Airport to Haneda Airport, disappeared abruptly. Korean students going on a school excursion, Japanese students returning from a school excursion, and teachers from both nations-guardians included-were on board. Some lived, some died, and some vanished. My father wasn't lucky enough to be a part of the group of people who lived.

According to what I researched later on about this plane incident, although it was surrounded by mysteries and questions, starting from the disappearances, regardless of what doubts people had, the incident itself was never fully explained. I, who was living under my single father, suddenly became an orphan one morning, and once the funeral was over I ended up going to my relative's place. The reason why I was living off of my uncle's place was that.

Nothing in particular happened when I started living under the same roof as my female cousin who had the same age as me. Of course, nothing special happened when I started going to the same school as her as well. I was nothing more than a child who had become an orphan and reality wasn't as warm as those animations. In truth, my cousin and I, though it's the same right now, didn't get along that well at the time.

At one point, I may have thought that she wasn't at fault. My uncle hated me, and my aunt.....mm, it was a bit complicated, in any case, the two of them always argued with me as the main topic. 'Since you thoughtlessly said you'd take care of him.', 'What about it? You're being inconsiderate.', 'Be it considerate or whatever, our lives have priority. What will you accomplish by increasing the number of mouths to feed?', 'Then what would you have done? No one was going to take him, that poor young child.', 'My older brother is a politician and has a lot of money, if we left him alone then he would have taken him.', 'Sure he would. He despised the idea. Really, why couldn't you have been as successful as your brother.', 'If you didn't dedicate your money to the church.', 'And if you didn't spend so much money chasing after women.', within a household where these sorts of conversations would echo throughout, that's why my younger cousin, Miyeong, had no other option except to dislike me.

And because she was a child, a child had the tendency to honestly express their emotions. So it was obvious that Miyeong would actively display her ‘hatred’ towards me even at school, and as kids are kids, they were bound to be swept up by it easily. It was already decided whose side they would take when comparing me, who had just transferred to the school, with Miyeong, who had been going to this school for awhile now.

Thinking back at it now, in the end, the origin was this petty……I, was bullied.

That, was when I met Joo Chanmi.



A day has passed. I organized the information I had about this place where I was going to be living in.

First, this place is underground.

Second, there are stairs going upstairs but there are also steel bars blocking the path.

Third, right beside those bars is the torture chamber, past that chamber is a hallway with cells laid out on both sides, and at the end of the hallway is a prison guard room with a table, chair, lamp, and a wooden bed.

I ended up spending my time in that prison guard room. I was returned to my cell once before being summoned again, but soon after, I received the order to ‘use this room’. If I were to look back at the conversation(that took place in the torture chamber) then it went like this: “You could have just opened the door to the solitary cell.”

“Ah hah ha. You serious? Then I wouldn’t be able to return you, Mr. Yujin, to your cell.”

“Is that your final safety precaution?”

“No, it’s not really my final option. It’s just the easiest and safest method. You don’t have any special ability, right?”

“You sure?”

“Though there were certainly some out of the ordinary things, you were surprised by the fact that magic existed and you thought that I was a chuunibyou.”

Come to think of it, I did say that. Thinking about it now, those were unnecessary words. Those words I ended up blurting out because I didn't properly press down my emotions. If I didn't say something like that, then my options would have increased. For example, pretending to possess some sort of terrifying super power..... Anyway, it's impossible now. If you bring up needless words, then those unleashed words will kill your future without any hesitation whatsoever.

“At the very least, it probably isn't a physical ability or something that sticks out immediately.”

The Earl hummed to herself and added that line to the end. I no longer wished to murder my potential futures, so I only shrugged my shoulders in response to her.

“Anyway, you can use that room you saw earlier. Summoning someone over and over again-Well, there's a small, circumstance.”

Circumstance, is it? The fact that she slurred the end of her sentence meant it was something that was disadvantageous to her, thus meaning, there is some sort of limit to her summoning ability.

This wasn't the time to ask.

“It was rather empty. Are there no clothes, water to wash with, a toilet, or something to eat?”

“You're asking for a lot?”

“Are you telling me to entertain you like this?”

“Is there a problem?”

“You don't know how easily males become dirty, do you?”

“Ah ha? But I’m already well aware of that.”

“Then you know that in around two days, you’ll be receiving services from a guy who is covered with a bunch of dead skin, smeared with his own feces, and drinking his own piss, right?”

“.....At that point, I’ll probably just kill you instead, you know?”

“Cleaning up blood, intestines, and bones is different from wiping shit.”

“That may be so, but..... Ah, people like you.....”

The Earl of the Silver Lion looked at me with annoyed eyes and scratched the back of her head.

“Ah, whatever. If it’s a bathroom, then there’s one near the guard room. It’s open so you can use that. As for water to wash with, I’ll do something about it so wait. Food.....”

“I’m not going to drink the Heaven milk.”

“Are you complaining about your meal? In this situation?”

“I said so before, but I don’t like stimulating things.”

“What you like doesn’t matter. Do I have to tell you something, as simple as, eating? Mr. Yujin, right now you’re in a circumstance where you have to eat whatever I give you, you knooow? You’re saying that while knowing that, riight?”

It’s a bad sign if the end of her lines starts being dragged. Although I’ve grasped that already, I didn’t back off here.

“I don’t mind if you want to gain the initiative by picking on every word I say, but I’ve continued to be respectful to you. Hoping you would similarly be respectful towards me, that shouldn’t be a wrong desire.”

The Earl may have furrowed her brow, but she did not reveal her teeth. A long silence.

She clicked her tongue and folded her arms.

“You prattle well, for an otherworldly creature.”

I didn't tell her that she was doing the same from my perspective. If I uttered those words, then the 'equal treatment of human beings', which I piled up until now, will break apart. I can't lash out at her. Regardless, trying to push on any further than this would be dangerous, so I kept my mouth shut and waited. The peerage title of omission.

“I'll give you food. Though, it's not really because I respect you.”

“Thanks.”

“.....Haa. Then what, I have to provide you clothes, water, and food, these three things? Moreover, since they're expendables, it's tiresome.....”

“If it's okay, I hope I can get a pen and paper as well.”

“It's not okay, it's annooying..... Really, should I just kill him?”

This girl who muttered those words indifferently. Quickly, I have to create my foundation-'something that she would regret', underneath me. At this rate, 4 days would be my limit. If someone asked me why I thought I only had 4 days left, then I could only say it was thanks to my intuition.....

“I'll see you later.”

As if she had lost interest, the Earl dusted her coat, put away her rod, and raised her left hand. From her little finger to her index finger, her nails were polished black, excluding her remaining nail which was painted white. A necklace, which I have no idea when she took out, was held in her hand. And then-Flash.....!!

Something appeared in front of the Earl of the Silver Lion.

Someone of the same age as me, however, not a part of the same homo sapiens-a girl, from another world. She had blue hair, blue eyes, and similar to the Earl, she had a crack in her pupils as well. She had a pretty appearance, but a sense of coldness was emanating from her as well. Her height was nearly the same as my own and her entire body was equipped in armor.....the me who was able to notice all this within the span of a single

second, truly, I should be thankful to the first half of the 8 Years' War.

Thud……!!

“Kyaahuu……!!” A scream. Seeing as she fell backwards the moment she was summoned meant that she must have been sitting down. She was holding a knife in her right hand and a fork in her left hand, so that probably meant that she was in the middle of a meal. The blue-haired female—that’s too long, the female knight fixed her gaze at the Earl.

“Korza! Biess—Krinknte’ zes!!”

It seems the Earl was laughing while placing the black nail, of her left thumb, near her mouth.

……Hm?

Wait. Come to think of it, back in the torture chamber as well.

“Zia. Sitro—kosa, Brink—aizio.”

“Noveme, Korza… Isurasias’ zes.” The female knight, who let out a deep sigh, glanced around the room once and a tired expression appeared on her face. “Aikaz akshmidao’ zes’ niano…”

“Tobok Sanke, Zia.”

“Kabo’ zes’ na.”

The female knight let out another sigh and, without even giving me a single glance, put out her hand towards the Earl. The Earl grinned and jumped into the female knight’s arms, ignoring the knight’s outstretched hand. With an expression of resignation on her face, the female knight hugged the Earl. The Earl then spoke.

“Tarz.”

There was a glimmer.

That was it. Without leaving a single trace, the Earl and the female knight disappeared. In an instant, I ended up in a situation where the only things



remaining in the room were me and the otherworldly creatures bound to their racks. Since it wasn't really a delightful place, I returned to the prison guard room I was assigned. I then fell asleep on top of the wooden bed and woke up. I was exhausted.

My fatigue didn't go away even after sleeping. Rather, it felt as if it had become worse. It was mainly because I had confirmed that this situation wasn't a nightmare, but in truth, reality. I was able to organize my thoughts a fair bit, so I had a grasp on how the Earl was able to disappear earlier. She had canceled the summon after having 'attached' herself to her summon target. It most likely went along with the logic behind why a summoned being was summoned with their clothes on and not naked.

Furthermore, I understood why she had resorted to that method of leaving. She most likely didn't want to show me the sight of the bars leading to the stairs being opened. Although I'm now able to move around more freely down here, don't be mistaken. My prison has become only a slight bit bigger, nothing more than that..... It was that kind of subtle warning. She's similar to Chanmi in the fact that she's obsessed with gaining the initiative. Albeit, there's also the chance that she's simply just too lazy to walk up the stairs herself..... This too is similar to Chanmi.

Whichever it was, let's put it aside for now since I already have a fair grasp on both situations..... I thought of something else, something more important.

About the Earl of the Silver Lion's nails.

About those nails on her left hand that were colored black from her pinky to her index finger, but were definitely black all the way to her thumb when she had summoned that female knight.



Assumptions themselves weren't difficult to make, but I believed that a different basis was also required. Furthermore, even if my assumption were true, I would then need a separate time to contemplate whether that fact would indeed be helpful to me in my current situation. It probably

won't be that helpful in the end, though. But it's fine. Information that is gathered in a calm and orderly fashion will most certainly become useful in the future.

Although, at heart, I didn't want to prolong this situation long enough to rely on the term 'in the future'.

I'm investigating because of that reason. Nothing will be gained if I doze off.

First, the things I have on me. My pajamas, prayer beads, and a smartphone. Referentially, there's still no signal. Of course, if this really is another world then something like a cellular base station wouldn't exist. Although it seems like there's no problem with the functions on the phone..... would there be an occasion where I could use them? Should I just listen to music until the batteries die? It would have been a good idea if I had brought my manual battery charger.

I rummaged through the prison guard room. It must not have been used in quite awhile since there was a layer of dust piled up everywhere. I should clean..... the moment these words came to my head, I noticed a broom, a dustpan, and a mop leaning against the wall. I cleaned and wiped each corner of the room until I was able to make the space reasonably clean. But there were no water sources so there was a limit to the wiping.

Cleaning finished. Resume investigation. If I were to explain the layout of the guard room, then it's a doorless area that's directly connected to the hallway. When you first enter the room, there's a table with a lamp placed on top of it situated directly in front of you. On the other side of the table is a chair, and to the right, there's a single bed. All of which were made from wood. There were 3 hanger-like objects fastened to the left wall. For first impressions, this place was truly a bare space.

Sitting on the chair, I could see the hallway that's enshrouded in darkness, and the iron doors laid out on both sides of the hall. Back during the time when this place was still actively being used, would the guard have sat here while on duty? The guard would have read a book, wrote in their journal, and when the time arrived, they would have grabbed this lamp and patrolled each and every one of the cells, peaking inside all of them. I examined the lamp. Although it had run out of oil a long time ago, it seemed

to still be in working condition.

Wondering if a type of journal was left behind, or if something else was under the bed, I lowered myself to the floor and searched the underside of the bed, but to no avail.

At that point, I stopped my investigation of the guard room and went out to the hallway. She said there was a bathroom near the guard room, and there was certainly a door adjacent to the guard room in the hallway. Once I opened the door, I saw an old fashioned toilet and an old fashioned foothold, both made from wood, and a yellowish brown color smeared here and there.

The smell wasn't as bad as I thought it'd be. My confusion was answered when I peered inside the toilet in question. There was a sewer system under it and I could see some water flowing down a waterway. It was about 2 meters down? My older cousin would have measured it more accurately.

If one were to examine the hole more closely, then they would know that there's a walkable pathway on both sides of the waterway. Is this prison really okay? It seems incredibly lax..... this thought came up for an instant, but if you think about it properly, this bathroom can only be used by the guards, and a prison guard has no reason to go down to the sewers to escape. Of course, I'm not a guard, so..... if the sewer system is connected to the outside, then it's possible for me to go through it and escape.....

Nonsense.

It doesn't matter where I go, if she cancels my summon then I'll return to the solitary cell. Even if she didn't do that, as long as she has my 'catalyst', she can summon me regardless of my location. It literally meant that it didn't matter where I was-has she not already dragged me into this different world?

Therefore, I'll pass on this sewer system. If some variable occurs later on, then I'll come back here at that time. Since I was already here, I emptied my bladder and then returned to the hallway.

The only things left were the solitary cells.

Iron doors that were facing one another, there were 20 in total. Each door had a hole going through its center to allow people to peer inside. Before looking inside each and every one of those holes, I tried shouting out first.

“Is there anyone here!?”

No response.

“Is there perhaps, someone, other than me, here……!?”

No response.

“Is there, no one, here!?”

No response……after giving up on that idea, it was at the moment I was about to peer inside the hole on the door directly beside the bathroom.

“I see your vocal cords are good.”

Korean. It was a voice that I had heard before as well.

Alarmed, I turned towards the source of the voice. I saw someone walking down the hall from the torture room. I recognized the person and also understood why it felt as if I had heard their voice before.



Standing there with a strapping height, cold face, and wearing armor, was the blue haired female knight that the Earl had summoned earlier. In her hand, she was holding something that looked like a basket with a white cloth covering the top.

“Food and clothes. Her Excellency the Earl ordered me to give these to you.”

I blinked. No, it’s a bit troubling if you speak so naturally.

“Uh, well, what should I say…… Korean?”

“? Is there a reason why I shouldn’t be able to speak Korean?”

“No, there’s no particular reason you shouldn’t, but……. You didn’t use it earlier.”

“Well, I didn’t have a reason to do so at the time.”

“……Did you learn it?”

“Like I said, is there a reason why I shouldn’t have? I also know a little bit of *Ezantel*… underwater world language and the world of heavens language.”

That’s interesting. Our language, which isn’t really that popular even back on Earth, is being treated the same as the language from the world of heavens.

“By those words, that means other people besides you and the Earl also know Korean.”

“A little in the castle, but if you’re asking on a global scale, then I’m not too certain. In the first place, researching other worlds was incredibly difficult to do before Her Excellency the Earl discovered her own ability. Even now, although it seems like a fair amount of people are learning the language of the heavens, Korean, not so much.”

“So it wasn’t being treated the same…….”

“If I say it in your people’s terms, then it’d be a third world language.”

Seriously, just what kinds of Koreans came here before me for it to be ‘in your people’s terms’.

“Referentially, Her Excellency the Earl knows how to speak Japanese and English as well.”

“That’s impressive. 3 languages. That’s 2.5 tiers higher than the average on Earth.”

“It’s talent. It’s a matter of time for canine teeth to grow on carnivores.”

It was like the saying that talent relating to one's capabilities will follow behind them. The blue haired female knight stepped towards me and handed me the basket. After setting the basket down and pulling aside the piece of cloth, I could see bread, soup, cooked meat, and a fruit that looked like a tangerine inside. Further in the basket, there was a container with water and well-folded clothes.

“Thanks.”

“If you want to thank someone then do it to Her Excellency the Earl of the Silver Lion. I'm just a mere envoy<sup>[1]</sup>.”

Though it feels like I heard a very slight play on words just now, let's ignore it.

“Are you going to leave immediately?”

“I'm not busy.”

“Then can you be my conversation partner for a bit?”

The blue haired female knight raised an eyebrow. Despite that, whether it was because she didn't feel right taking back her words of not being busy, or because she originally planned to do this anyway, she nodded her head. I lifted up the basket and headed towards the prison guard room, the blue haired female knight following behind me silently.

Setting the food out on top of the table, I then yielded the chair to the female knight. I found a reasonable place and sat down on the ground nearby. The female knight sat down on the chair, but she turned down the food.

“I'm fine. If it's a meal, then I already had mine. I'm always taking care of things like that thoroughly.”

“Well, you were eating during that time when you were summoned before.”

“Really, I'm contemplating on whether I should set up fixed times for when I'm available to be summoned. One time, I was summoned right when I sat down in the bathroom with my underwear down. It was a big

deal.”

“Certainly, that’d be troubling…….”

“Of all occasions, it had to have been when I was going to take a big one<sup>[2]</sup>, so it was an even bigger problem.”

Though it feels like I heard a very slight play on words again, let’s ignore it. She seems like a person who’d get along well with Soohyeon.

“You aren’t going to eat?”

“Later.”

“If it’s because of what I said that you lost your appetite, then…….”

“I assure you that isn’t the case. I didn’t lose my appetite, it’s simply because I don’t eat while talking. It’s not appealing to look at and it’s disrespectful to the other party.

The blue haired female knight raised her eyebrow once more. I looked up at the female knight, who was like that, straight in the face.

“Han Yujin. Nineteen. I’m a student.”

“Gia Batsand. Eighteen. A member of the Silver Lion Royal Guards.”

So she’s 18.

“How does a year work here?”

“If I were to explain it in terms you’d understand, then 7 days is 1 week, 4 weeks is 1 month, 12 months is 1 year, and adding the holiday at the end of the year, it’s 337 days. However, since a day is 26 hours, the actual time is similar to your world.”

“What month is it right now?”

“January.”

It was January in my world too. Certainly, the days were similar. 18, huh.

“To be a knight at that age, that’s impressive.”

“There’s nothing to be impressed by. Since I’m an esteemed daughter, and there was a need for a female knight, I received the education to become a knight ever since I was a little girl. Of course, since I’ve become a knight, I can boast a refinement that befits one.”

Well, rookies participating in the Olympics are usually around that age too.

“And who did you learn Korean from?”

“Her Excellency the Earl and Ahyeon.”

“Ahyeon?”

“The Korean that Her Excellency the Earl summoned when she was 8-years-old. He was around for about 4 years, and if you spend that much time together with someone, then it’s a given that you’d learn their language.”

Gia Batsand spoke with somewhat dimmed eyes. By the looks of it, it seems they must have been quite close. Well, if they weren’t that close then she wouldn’t have been able to speak Korean this well. ……For me, that 4 years time was a surprise.

“What happened? To that person, that is.”

Gia shrugged her shoulders. No reply.

“After that…… did more Koreans come?”

“Many.”

“What happened to them?”

Gia stared straight into my eyes. And then,

“Han Yujin.”

She called my name and continued.



“There are a countless number of things in the world that you are unable to do something about. Putting your world as an example, there are an innumerable number of people who are killed in a car accident every day. Among them, there isn’t a single one who thinks something like, ‘I’m going to die in a car accident’ as they walk out onto the street. However, car crashes are a reality. Dying is a reality. A reality that occurs. It can’t be changed.”

Silence.

“You, will die.”

Gia looked down at me with her blue eyes.

“Your limbs will be torn, nails will be stabbed into your eyes, your tongue will be ripped out, your abdomen will be lacerated, and your internal organs will be dug out. You will die, incredibly, painfully. It will be an indescribably painful death. There’s no way out.”

I let out a sigh.

“Thanks for the advice. Your point?”

“Although it’s your freedom to try and find hope in your conversation with me, I don’t have the ability to give you that hope.”

“And the reason why you’re having a conversation with me despite that?”

“? You’re the one who wanted me to be your conversation partner.”

So, if I’m to organize this : Since you’re a poor fellow who’s going to die soon, the least I can do is listen to your trivial requests. Something like that? Sort of feels like a last wish gimmick.

“Even if, there’s no horse<sup>[3]</sup> here.”

“.....You’ve been wanting me to go along with your word play since a while ago, haven’t you?”

“What, so you’ve noticed? Ahyeon was incredibly skilled at this.”

“I’m starting to get a feel for what type of person he was……. Do you want me to? I can if you want.”

“Give it a shot.”

“In the first place, are there even horses in this world!?”

“There are, but they have beaks.”

“They aren’t horses the moment they have beaks!”

“Of course, they also have wings and wattles.”

“I didn’t ask! Those aren’t characteristics of a horse!”

“When dawn breaks they all cry out together, and the stables instantly become disorderly.”

“What are you talking about!? Aren’t those just excellent chickens!?”

“Additionally, they’re tasty if you fry them.”

“They’re just chickens!”

Gia Batsand stood up while letting out ‘kuh’ sound. She had a satisfied look on her face.

“You, you’re impressive.”

“Are you satisfied?”

“It’s been such a long time since I’ve had a true conversation like this…….”

“Although I could satisfy you more by saying something like, ‘Your parameter for measuring the trueness of a conversation is strange!’ or, ‘A girl shouldn’t be attached to something like this!’. I’m sorry, it’s not really my style…….”

“Why not!?”

“Even if you ask…… it just isn’t my preference.”

“That’s a weird preference.”

Though it feels like ‘Look who’s talking!’ would be a good tackle point here, let’s put it aside.

“I have a friend named Soohyeon and he really enjoys things like this.”

“Is that it! Is the point in the present<sup>[4]</sup>!?”

Though it feels like ‘It has no relation to the name!’ would be a good tackle point here, let’s put it aside.

No, really. It’s not my style, so stop looking at me with those expecting eyes.

“Going past that for now, I’m grateful that you explained it in a way that’s easy to understand while using car accidents as an example.”

“Mm.”

“You don’t want me to have needless expectations, right? That’s nice of you.”

“It’d be troubling if you died while resenting me, after all.”

“Have you not considered the possibility that you’ll end up being resented for having said that? Some people don’t resent the person who confines them, but they’ll rage against the person who tells them that they’re being confined instead.”

“I believe you aren’t that kind of person.”

“How do you know?”

“Since you’ve gotten to the ‘second day’.”

“Mmm.”

“If you were a normal person who’d get upset from hearing those kinds

of words, then it would have been impossible for you to have gained Her Excellency's interest and remained alive. You would have had zero chance to wake up in a place that isn't the torture rack, and you wouldn't be able to place your mouth on something other than Her Excellency the Earl's waste. However, you are alive right now. You've received food and clothes. Moreover, you haven't fallen into a state of panic either."

Although they were thankful words, there was something else that attracted my interest.

"So there's been others. Other people who got past the first day."

"Not a lot, though."

I didn't ask her about what happened to them. Despite that, Gia continued to speak.

"The number of people who got to the third day is two. No one has gotten to the fourth day. But, if you judge those creatures tied up in the torture chamber as 'having passed the fourth day', then it'd be a bit different."

Of course, I didn't plan to judge them as so.

"What about Ahyeon? You said he stayed alive for 4 years."

"Even Her Excellency the Earl wasn't like this back then."

"Certainly, you said she was 8-years-old..... Is there a reason why she became like this?"

Gia shrugged her shoulders. This girl seems to have a clear distinction between the incidents she can talk about and the ones she can't.

Organizing the information I couldn't hear : What happened to the Earl's first summon, Ahyeon, and the reason why the Earl became like this.

Okay, let's dig into these later.

"Want to make a bet?"

"A bet?"

“If I’m able to safely enter into my fourth day. When the Earl tries to kill me…… even once is fine, so please stop her.”

Gia looked at me with pity. I quickly took the words out of her mouth.

“Don’t say something like, ‘I said that earlier because I knew you might get this kind of hope.’. Wouldn’t a single time be possible for you? You seem to be receiving quite the amount of trust from the Earl, after all.”

“Is that your assumption?”

“You said you were a guard. You also talked about the time that Ahyeon was summoned. Wouldn’t that mean you’ve stuck close to the Earl ever since you were young? Furthermore, the Earl’s personality is really bad too.”

“I don’t really get what you mean by that last part.”

“I’m saying that her human relations must have been limited. There are many cases like that in Korea too.”

It’s the characteristic of these childish people to dig further into others the more they’re limited from contact. While recalling Eun Minseon, who was one of the mid-bosses in Chamni’s faction, I spoke.

“Well, the personality of the person I know, who was in a similar situation, wasn’t as bad as the Earl you’re serving…”

“I’m contemplating whether I should challenge you to a duel.”

“You don’t have to. The Earl never told me to keep my manners, either.”

Gia folded her arms. Although they were words that I uttered on purpose, despite having already understood the situation earlier, I felt regret. If you think about it, I didn’t have to bring up the Earl’s personality. A long time hasn’t even passed since I decided to not get swayed by my emotions and say pointless things, but I ended up like this again. It can’t be helped. I’m not 100%. I am-after all, nothing more than a high school student who has experience in overcoming bullying.

“Okay, but why do I have to accept that bet?”

“If you believe that the conversation earlier was sufficient.”

“Payment for the tsukkomi, is it?”

No, damn it.

The Koreans that came here, especially that Ahyeon guy, are all bad.

At least call it a tackle or a straight man act. Do you have to use the original language? Really, even in a different world, otakus are still otakus.....

“Well, it’s not only that..... I’m saying that in hopes that you’ll help me.”

If I’m going to survive, then the assistance from the right-hand person of the Earl is absolute. For a person who knows Korean and isn’t hostile towards me, to appear in front of me, this was a lucky break.

If you look at it in that viewpoint, then commenting about the Earl’s personality earlier was truly an unnecessary remark.

What can I do about that slip-up?

“Please.”

I said that and lowered my head. A moment of silence.

Gia let out a sigh and stood up.

“I’ll do what I can.”

“Thank you.”

I expressed my gratitude with my utmost sincerity and certainty.

I watched as Gia, who had shrugged her shoulders, turned around and walked away.



The meal was surprisingly good. I was already feeling hungry, so I ended up eating everything. If I had some green tea to go along with it, then I wouldn't want anything more. Twisting one's body in accordance to the heat that radiates throughout it from drinking a hot glass of green tea after a meal, is an incredibly satisfying sensation. It was truly unfortunate that I wasn't able to experience it now.

I examined the clothes I had received. Surprisingly, I found sweat (Training [\[5\]](#)? But if I say training pants then you wouldn't understand.) pants and a t-shirt. Also, instead of socks and shoes, I was provided a pair of slippers instead. Were these used by that Ahyeon guy? If you consider the Earl's ability, then going back and forth between worlds is simple, so bringing useable household goods wouldn't be difficult.

Looking at it like that, it should have been an easygoing other world life, but what could have possibly happened for things to end up like this? Why did the Earl become a psycho and what happened to you, Ahyeon?

No matter how much I thought about it, the answer didn't come to me. I was lacking too much information.

I changed my clothes within the darkness of the prison which made it feel like weights were pulling my body down. I put on the slippers as well. I folded the pajamas that I was wearing into a neat pile and put them at the edge of the bed. I planned to use them as a pillow.

Next, resume my investigations.

I looked into the hole of every cell. The size of each cell were all different. There were several doors that could be opened and shut.

I organized the rooms with any type of significance.

Placing the guard room as the reference point, the cells closest to the room started from 1, and the left side was row A while the right side was row B.

Cells with openable doors : A-1, B-4, B-7, A-10  
The cell I was in : B-5  
Cells with wreckage-like objects (does not move) within  
them : A-2, B-3, B-7, B-10

End.

In rooms like B-7, since the door could be opened and there was something inside as well, I surveyed the cell thoroughly. There was something similar to a small stone coffin and a rotting corpse covered by a straw mat within it. Although the body was almost completely decomposed, so it was difficult to be certain, it appeared to be a Korean person.

Furthermore, many graffiti that were written in blood remained in most of the cells. Should I call it their will.....? There were a lot of symbols that I didn't understand, but I could see some Korean among them. <Save me> <Who put me here?> <Mommy> <I'm scared> <My name is Kim Gwanhyeong, I live in Beuchon>.....

....., ....., ....., mm.

Bear with it.

Calm down, Yujin.

Prayers beads, while touching my beads.

Something like emotions..... control those completely and..... pull yourself together.

I only have bad recollections in regards to churches, since it relates to my aunt, but I know of no other method to commemorate the memories of the deceased. There are other worlds, and the Earl did mention 'your world's heaven'. If that's the case, then perhaps, wouldn't that mean there's a chance that Gods and Devils do possibly exist? If there really is some greater existence that's watching over all of us, then please, God in Heaven,



give these pitiful souls mercy. And in the end, allow them to enter your embrace.



Once I finished my investigation on the solitary cells and the hallway, and the only place left to investigate was the torture chamber, the Earl of the Silver Lion threw open the door to the torture room and appeared.

“Anten!” Throwing me something similar to a greeting, she started spinning like a magical girl who was transforming. “I’ve come to plaaay.”

“Sure.”

“Now then, Mr. Yujin. Entertain meee. You have to entertain me a lot, you know? Ah hah ha ha.”

The Earl then needlessly summoned me in front of her, with a poof, and beamed at me. I examined the appearance of the girl who had just appeared. She was wearing a similar attire to yesterday, but with shoes this time. Seeing that there were splotches of blood here and there on her clothes, she must have enjoyed herself in the torture chamber for a moment before coming here. Moreover, the tattoo on the back of her hand was black now…… My assumption might be correct.

“Surely you won’t say it’s impossible this late into the game, right? Ah hah ha. It’s okay! Even now, I can tie you up to a rack. Ah ha, ah ha ha ha. I’ll play with you all the way down to your bone marrow. And by marrow, I mean it literally. I’ll pull some out and put them into a beaker with some other weird liquid…… Gya hah ha ha!?”

That last laugh most likely wasn’t done intentionally by the Earl. She let out a ‘kya’, after all.

“What are you doing!? Mr. Yujin!”

“You told me to entertain you.”

“Even if I did, do people normally resort to ticklin…… gya hah ha? Uh,

stoop it.”

“It was a joke.”

“A physical joke like this, I don’t neeeeed it!”

“Alright, but you’re really defenseless. Earl, is it fine for you to allow me to approach your body so easily?”

“Hm? Ah, that’s-.”

“If there were feathers attached to my hands, then just now, you could have been tickled by twice the amount.”

“A subtly peaceful warning!?”

“Since I don’t like things that are too stimulating.”

“I’m not sure whether I should say that you’re unwavering, that you’re full of gusto despite seeming like an idiot, or question why the feathers would be attached to your hand and not be held by them…”

“I’ll say it now, but you’re too late to say the third option.”

“You dropped your guard there on purpose……!?”

She’s really enjoying this. Well, seeing as her royal knight was like that as well, what else could she have learned when Ahyeon, the person who taught her Korean, probably had that kind of personality.

In any case, it seems the mood is softer compared to yesterday. Since the situation has changed from ‘Certified torture death’ → ‘Spared for now’, her correspondence probably changed accordingly. I shouldn’t misunderstand. My life is still hanging by a thread.

“Anyway, Earl. Is there something troubling you?”

A question mark appeared on the face of the Earl who was enjoying herself.

“Your complexion doesn’t look that good, so I thought something might

be on your mind.”

I said that because I did feel that sort of mood coming off from her, but, I was also planning to ask that question even if I didn’t feel anything. The Barnum effect. A vague but appropriate guess was a good method to make the other party give out more information about themselves.

Sure enough, the Earl of the Silver Lion went into thought for a moment. It seems I momentarily won’t have to worry about going on the torture rack.

“What? Not really? If I had to say there is one, then there is something.”

“What is it?”

“Ah ha ah. Why do I have to tell you? Mr. Yujin.”

“Ah ha ah. Why should I tell you? Mr. Yujin. Jinx…… I failed.”

“It was dangerous……!?”

“Keep your guard up.”

“Uh, mm…….” It seemed the Earl of the Silver Lion, psycho, serial killer via summoning & torture, sincerely went into deep thought. “It’s nothing special. Just some trial problem.”

While ushering me with her hand, the Earl started to walk. Not towards the torture chamber, but to the prison guard room.

“You deal with court stuff, too?”

The Earl showed her teeth and laughed.

“Ufufu. Isn’t that obvious? I am a person who was allowed the Silver Coffin and the Green Orb, *Korza*! The Earl.”

“Wouldn’t you normally have a separate department for that?”

“NoNoNoNo! In this City of Confinement, I have to handle it.”

“What’s the scale of this city for you to do that?”

“Mm, Mr. Yujin. That’s not important, Mr. Yujin.”

It must be small then.

“What’s the case?”

“Should I call it a demolition issue? There’s a group called ‘Fedchant’. It’s a gathering of merchants that holds its position in one of the 12 major factions. It’s also a religious clique that worships one of the 12 Gods, the Superior Iyanko Niyaon. Well, in any case.”

If there are 12 factions and 12 gods, then that means there are 12 groups that are around the same size here. Let’s keep this in mind.

“Federation of Merchants. Fedchant for short?”

“YesYes. Just like that abbreviation, it’s also quite the shitty place. Their headquarters bought the land of one of my city people. However, that citizen doesn’t want to leave. The headquarters of those Fedchants requested of me to demolish that land. End of story.”

“These sorts of problems exist in any world, huh……no wait. They bought the land? Did they make a contract?”

“YupYupYupYup. Documents are valid. Seal stamped. Not forged. Thank you very much.”

“Then isn’t it over? If you’re going to deal with the issue with legitimacy, then don’t you have to comply?”

“The problem is this civilian, is holding out saying that they’ve never stamped any documents. Claiming that they’re being set up, they submitted a direct petition to me.”

“I don’t get it.”

“Since English<sup>[6]</sup>, is difficuult.”

“I don’t understand Korean, either.”

“He received it naturally……!?”

“Did a spouse or relative sign the contract in that person’s stead?”

“Oho. An enduring elderly person. A son who lived somewhere else. Fedchants holding out money. The son swallows that up. Something like episode 803 of [Screening Humanity](#)?”

“I think there’s a subtle difference, but…… you know Screening Humanity?”

“It’s enjoyable…… Anyway, that’s not it either. That person lives alone, and they’re not old.”

It’s a story that made me want to say ‘What nonsense is this?’, but after rotating my prayer beads and organizing the information calmly…… what nonsense is this?

“So you think the person was controlled by magic and was made to sign it, something like that?”

In order to solve an unfathomable situation, I have no other choice but to bring in magic. It’s a relief that this is a world where magic exists. The Earl of the Silver Lion nodded her head.

“That’s one of my assumptions. There’ll be some traces remaining if mind magic was used, but I think the right answer might be that someone stole the seal in secret and used it.”

While we were having our conversation, we entered the guard room. The Earl, who had sat down on the chair and took off her boots, crossed her legs. She then looked at me with sparkling eyes…… I held back a sigh.

The moment I went under the table, the Earl continued speaking while wriggling her toes.

“The problem is that this isn’t the only, mm, case. The Fedchants acquired land on quite a large scale this time, and eleven people came to submit direct petitions…… hm-mm, all with the same story. No matter who looks at this, it’s clear that those shitty people are messing around. How dare they do so in my city.”

“Didn’t you brag about being the First Sky Barrier out of the Twelve Sky Barriers before?”

“Shuuut uuuuup! Ah, a little bit more there. In any case…… I’m a newcomer among the Twelve Sky Barriers.”

For the First Sky Barrier to be a newcomer. I guess it’s not in order of who joined first. Either the order is correct, but it counts upwards, or the rank is determined by one’s ability? This is ambiguous, too. I’ll keep note of this.

“Well, you’re young, after all.”

“YupYupYup. I’m still a young and healthy 16-year-old, you know? Sweet sixteen, you know?”

“Who loves torture, that is.”

“If you compare me to a flower, then a withered rose. If you compare me to a color, then a viscous deep red.”

“That’s an acidic combination.”

“It’s a sick combination!”

“No, it’s more fermented.”

“It’s rotten!”

“Isn’t that worse?”

“Who cares? It’s my preference, please respect it, bracket lol bracket.”

Although that’s something I should nitpick towards that guy, Ahyeon, since I’m busy with this massage, I’ll let it go. She must have felt ticklish since the squirming Earl cleared her throat with an ‘ehem’, and spoke.

“Furthermore, among the Sky Barriers, the Odd Sky Barriers that I’m a part of is, how should I say it, different from the Even Sky Barriers.”

“Since the Sky Barriers who receive an odd number and even number

are different.”

“Yeess. If you make them all pair up in two’s, then structurally, a loner will remain among the Sky Barriers. It’s determined by the academic value of one’s inborn talent.”

“One line summary : You don’t have a lot of power?”

My face was kicked. So is that the answer?

“How dare you say such ill-mannered words towards me, who’s renowned for being able to destroy the world.”

You’re able to destroy the world? Well, if there’s no exaggeration to her ability, then- something like destroying the world is trivial.

However, even if she could ‘destroy’ the world, since a contract doesn’t come along with her summoning ability, it’s a skill that’s difficult to rely on when trying to protect one’s own city.

“Is the scale of the Fedchants’ scheme too large to obstruct now?”

“That’s about right…… Moreover, the Fedchants have a Sky Barrier too. And that person is their leader. The Fedchants are led by the Eighth Sky Barrier of the Twelve Sky Barriers, the ‘Equivalent Exchange(Princess : Steel)’, who’s known as the Golden Sky.”

“Why Princess : Steel?”

“Since I’m the one who adds the expositions within the brackets. And why ‘steel’? Uh        it’s equivalent exchange.”

I believe that Ahyeon needs to take responsibility for this. Seriously.

“Referentially, their nickname in our world’s language is, *Kurd–Ox, Qisvellro satane…….*”

“I don’t understand your language yet, so you can stop. In conclusion, a fellow Sky Barrier is starting a fight with you?”

“Yeess. Well, even if you removed the member of the Twelve Sky

Barriers, the Fedchants still aren't people to be trifled with. In any case, their documents are perfect since they're a union of merchants."

If merchants and documents have power, then that means this world is quite civilized as well. While I was thinking that, the Earl puffed up her cheeks.

"So that's why I'm annoyed, and that's also why I gave an enema to my milk producing The★Maid in Heaven with its own milk earlier....."

"And since that didn't improve your mood, you came to me. Is that it?"

"There there. Ah, do it there a bit more."

The Earl of the Silver Lion leaned back against the chair contently while letting out a 'Hoo'. While I bent her pinky toe back, I asked her a question.

"What do they plan to do with the land?"

"They plan to build a Fedchant branch office here in the Confinement City."

"Isn't that a good thing?"

"Not really. This city isn't that bi..... I mean, it is big, but I don't think it's a scale where there should be a branch office. Adding to that, if a Fedchant branch office comes in, then a Mage Tower branch office will come in along with it- I don't want that."

"Mage Tower?"

"Should I call it the Assembly of Magic or the Association of Mages? It's a place where all mage groups and mages are a member of. Referentially, I'm not a member."

"Why no..... You're not going to answer that, are you?"

"Ufu. Are you sure you aren't actually a sorcerer from the Garden world? Mm..... Ah, excuse me. You were a boy, weren't you, Mr. Yujin."

I couldn't understand why being a boy was brought up there.



“Why do you think they’re trying to start a fight with you?”

“Ha-mm? There’s a lot of things that comes to mind, so I’m not suure.”

“You don’t buy grudges.”

“I can shoulder all the resentment in the world. There was a period in my life where even I thought like that.”

“So you don’t now?”

“Turn over a new leaf. The New Earl of the Silver Lion, is active. Yay.”

“What about me and those things in the torture chamber over there?”

“It’s okay! It’s fine since you’re all from a different world, so you have zero human rights! It’s fine since you’re all aliens who I don’t have to worry about the retaliation of! If you’re going to resent something, then resent your pitifully weak worlds that don’t have the technology to travel to different worlds, track different dimensions, and have the ability to travel faster than the speed of light.”

“I see your world’s Heaven is a weak place then.”

“Mm– Ah. The Milk Producer(Heaven Brand), in its own way, has a deep story behind it.”

“What story?”

“I helped a Devil and got it.”

“That’s not deep at all. From one Devil’s hand to another.”

“Ah hah ha. Even if you escape a depressing development, you’ll still be in another development of despair.”

I have to make sure that those words don’t end up being applied to me.

“And so-what will you do?” I asked her while tickling the edge of her foot.  
“You should have an idea.”

“That I do, but…… Mm~ Ah hah ha. It has nothing to do with you, Mr. Yujin, right? It’s my business.”

“How diligent.”

“Since I’m the New Earl of the Silver Lion, after all. Well, although in my heart, ‘I don’t care about something like work!’ and ‘I just want to mess around’ are being shouted. Work is still work. I said I’ll do it properly…… for now.”

“Do you have a motive?”

“I left things alone for too long so this became a mess and that became a mess. Even the public sentiment shattered and unhappiness became MAX. All I did was do nothing, but isn’t this too muuuch? This is why the ignorant masses are incompetent, is what the Earl of the Silver Lion, the Earl of the Silver Lion, thought<sup>[7]</sup>.”

Let’s pretend I didn’t hear that last line.

“Then don’t you have to deal with it properly?”

“Hm. Are you worried, Mr. Slave? Anxious about whether your master’s work will get resolved or not? Ufufu.”

At the very least, I know well that my chances of going to the torture chamber go up depending on how bad your mood is. I didn’t say that out loud.

“What are you going to do?”

“Mm~ what should I say? My mouth is starting to hurt now. I don’t really have to tell you, you know? Put more effort into the massage…… Gya hah ha ha!?”

“I told you, physical contact is too easy.”

“Wait, that’s cheating! Out, wait. Ah. Uh, gya hah, ah, that really tickles! Stop!”

“Tell me. If you don’t, then I’ll take your socks off and tickle you.”



was something I've done throughout the 8 Years' War.

“Uh, mm…… b-but, Mr. Yujin? That's not allowed, Mr. Yujin.”

“Why not?”

“Because, Mr. Yujin, I received the submission of the documents, you know? If those documents disappear then, Mr. Yujin, the side that received the documents will be at fault, you know? Mr. Yujin, the Fedchants will take legal action towards me, you know? Mr. Yujin.”

“Ah. Is that a problem? You can't make it so that the very fact you received the submissions never happened?”

“No matter how you look at it, that's a bit…… the law has to be obeyed.”

“So you aren't high enough to ignore the law, huh?”

“It's rather regrettable. One day, I want to be a noble that's great enough to ignore the law, but that probably won't happen.”

“Yeah, that'd be difficult.”

“That's right. That's right. Nya-nya-nya.”

Towards the Earl of the Silver Lion, who was letting out a sigh while wiping her forehead, I spoke.

“We didn't know when it was first submitted, but after investigating closely, oh dear, we discovered that they were elaborately forged papers', it'd be difficult if the situation wasn't like this, that is.”

“....., ....., ..., ....., ......”

The Earl let out a groan.

“But, if that side says something.”

“If the fact that they arranged those documents with illegal methods from the start is true, then they can't say anything.”

She let out a ‘Hm—‘ sound.

“But, the opponent is the Fedchants.”

“You said they were reprehensible. Crush them. You’re an aristocrat, aren’t you?”

She let out a ‘Gyauu……’ sound.

A moment of silence.

The Earl sprang up. She looked through her clothes and pulled out a small necklace.

“Gia Batsand, I special summon you in attack form!”

I’m not sure if she was in attack form, but Gia Batsand was summoned. She must have been off duty because she didn’t have any of her armor on and was wearing simple clothes. She was lying down and holding a single book in her hands, it was a paperback. The title of the book was ‘And the Young Master Dances on the Hand of the Savage Butler.’. On the cover, there was a boy that gave off an elegant feeling and a glasses wearing butler with a sharp look hugging the boy from behind…….

Let’s pretend I didn’t see that.

This and that.

In more ways than one.

“Korza!!”

Gia processed the situation quickly and let out a shout. After seeing me, she froze and dropped her book. It’s a tremendous progress compared to the time she ignored me despite having met my eyes yesterday.

“Korza, Ah. Nansitondel’ zes’ ko! Libara–Siasa’ zes’ niano!”

“I’ll start doing that next time. Anyway, dispatch! We’re returning to the land where we once lived! *Tarz!!*”

The Earl uttered and climbed on Gia's back. Instead of reigns, the Earl grabbed Gia's hair..... or not. She grabbed the back part of the brassiere which Gia was wearing under her shirt. No, would that work better as a reign instead of the hair? Although it seemed like Gia was trying to say something in protest, the Earl canceled the summon and with a 'poof', they disappeared. The only thing that was left behind was the BL novel that Gia had let go of while struggling.

Fortunately, it seems our king, Shahryar, is going to sleep for another night.

The reason why I wasn't able to enjoy this feeling honestly most likely wasn't because of the BL novel that had fallen before me.

.....Right?



And thus, the report of my investigation afterward.

First, the Earl of the Silver Lion's nails. I was able to confirm that the nail on the Earl's right-hand pinky had turned black after she summoned Gia.

The only idea I could think of was 'limited uses'. Something like being unable to use her skill anymore if all of her nails turn black..... since the tattoo on her left hand turned black after all of the nails on that hand did, and it then jumped to the nails on her right hand, that means that including the 10 fingers and the tattoos on the back of both of her hands, her limit must be 12. Since there's no way that could possibly be the total amount of times she can use her ability, then something like the numbers resetting after a fixed amount of time..... I don't have enough information to be certain. Let's keep this in check.

Second, I've decided to push the investigation of the torture room back a bit further. I'm too exhausted to face the pools of blood beyond that door. I nearly died there, you know? I'm going to sleep.

And finally..... the novel that Gia dropped. After picking it up and

examining it, I discovered that the release date was around 5 years ago. The publisher label was that place with the name of a jewel on it. There were finger marks on the pages, and by the looks of the release date, the chances of this having been brought by Ahyeon was high.

Earl, your subordinate releases her stress with BL.

You're an otaku, too. You should relieve your stress with-something healthy, like this.

Not with something like torture.

Not like a blood-covered savage.

Generally, shouldn't the spare time of a young person be spent healthily-  
? Something along those lines.

How good would it be if I could say this to her face.....

## Footnotes

1. [↑] The word '**Lion**' and '**Envoy**' uses the same word in Korean, '사자'.
2. [↑] '**Big one**' and '**Bigger problem**' uses the same Korean word '큰 일'.
3. [↑] '**Conversation**' can be read as '**horse**', and the line '**conversation partner**' can also be read as '**go against a horse**' in Korean '말 상대'.
4. [↑] '**hyeon**' and '**present**' uses the same Korean letter, '현'.
5. [↑] Sweat suits are calling '**Training**(츄리닝)' for some reason in Korean.
6. [↑] Another play on words, the '**it**' in "**I don't get it**" is written the same as '**English**' in Korean '영문'.
7. [↑] This repeat is on purpose.





My aunt believed that she didn't hate me. Regardless of the public opinion, if someone were to ask my aunt about why she hated her nephew so much, then she would probably be dumbfounded.

If anything, she supported me. She, herself, most likely believed that. This was clear since every time she introduced me to one of her fellow church-goers, she would tell them about how much of a pitiful child I was. Always including a small comment about how she was a saintess for having taken me, who was in that state, in because of her overflowing sympathy. She probably believed that it was a well-deserved gratuity towards her because she had treated her nephew with such compassion.

Even now, I end up recalling her voice whenever I smell the scent that comes from churches. Within the shadow cast down from the statue of Our Lord, you must understand the glory of Our Savior, and over all else, you must especially understand how big your uncle's and my hearts are for having decided to take you in, she was a person who would say these kinds of words to a 10-year-old child. Do you know what happened back then, Yujin? No one tried to take you in. They were all busy trying to live their own lives, after all. But do you know what your father's eldest brother did? He despised the idea, despised it! He didn't want to take care of you despite being a politician, successful, and rich! You, who had lost your parents and was crying in the funeral while surrounded by relatives, he didn't want to take in such a pitiful and young lamb! How could he abhor the idea that much!?! If it weren't for me, what would have happened to you, you poor pitiable young lamb?

Truly, you must learn how to give thanks.

I cowered. I'm not sure what other reaction a 10-year-old child, who had just become an orphan, should have given. That was probably the biggest reason behind why I didn't retaliate whatsoever to the bullying I received at school.

I was defenseless. I was a wide open new field. No matter how many times I was stepped on, hit, or cursed at, I didn't fight back-and merely cried, like a fool. I'm sorry. It's my fault. I'm sorry that I'm unhappy. I'm, luggage. I'm utterly useless luggage and all I do is inconvenience my uncle and aunt. I'm sorry, Miyeong. It's my fault. I'm, luggage. Since I'm a

retard, I believed that it couldn't be helped if anything happened to me.

In contrast, Joo Chanmi was a girl who was allowed to do anything.

An esteemed daughter who was promised everything. Whenever she walked, light swayed vaguely around her. A thick scent of flowers emanated from her whenever she brushed past someone. Her intelligence was like a sturdy steel tower. A level 99 prodigy girl who was beautiful, talented, and well-rounded in both sports and studying.

Should I say that the biggest misfortune was the fact that she was a girl?

That's right, a girl.

A girl with a lot of curiosity.

That girl, who wanted to sate that cruel curiosity of hers while not even possessing the slightest bit of hesitation.

To her, I must have been quite the interesting plaything. Like a machine running amok, she committed every possible thing she could think of towards me and didn't stop there. Joo Chanmi would repeatedly prove that she, herself, was really, truly, an authentic genius. Whenever I thought that nothing more severe could happen after this, she would prove me wrong the next time. Forced labor, giving false hope, sexual harassment, harsh insults, mob violence, slander..... everything. Time wasn't required for the bullying towards me to spread throughout my entire class, my entire grade, and soon, my entire school.

Running away was impossible. Although there was a time when I refused to go to school once, my uncle soon came and barked at me, 'We took in a child who doesn't have a mother or father, and you're not going to school?'. Even my aunt, 'How could you do this', she uttered, 'Do you not know how to show thanks?', she then wept. However, regardless of what anyone would say, the sole person to bust down my door and drag me by the hair was my younger cousin, Miyeong. 'Y-You, Y-Y-You, You, b-because you're not coming to school, I, I-I-I, I end up being the taaaarget!!!!'. Though it was Miyeong who started the flame, since the baton had been passed to Chanmi, the school had ended up in a state where it didn't matter who the target of the bullying was anymore.

What about graduation? Couldn't it have been resolved with that? Of course, it's possible. Every student will end up graduating, after all. However, this was a coed school that had an education system where everything from elementary school to university was all connected. Then a different method? I reiterated the words said by my aunt and the certain religion that she believed in. Suicide is a sin. The biggest betrayal. If you do something like that, then the people around you will be sad. Even when Judgement Day arrives, murderers will be forgiven, but apostates and people who commit suicide will not. I wasn't even allowed to kill myself.

The only path that I was allowed was to merely wither, fall sick, and die off slowly. Even when I entered into my first year of middle school, I sincerely believed that was my only fate.

The flaming transfer student, 'The Princess of Death', it was around that time that I met my goddess, Cha Minhee, for the first time.



I entered into my third day. I have yet to examine the torture room.

*“Anten! Are you awake!?”*

That's because, the moment I opened my eyes, the Earl of the Silver Lion was on top of my stomach. This time, her attire was a layer thinner than what she wore yesterday and the day before that. She was wearing pajamas with rabbit and pig patterns on them. For some reason, she still had on her socks, rings, and bracelets.

*“Earl.”*

*“Yeess! Did you sleep well?”*

*“I thought I was having a nightmare, but it seems I wasn't having sleep paralysis, but my stomach was being pressed down instead.”*

*“Ah ha ha. Pardon mee. But you really were being pressed down by scissors, you know? Here, look.”*

She then placed a pair of scissors<sup>[1]</sup> on top of my stomach. It seems like both master and servant are the same when it comes to cringy jokes.

“You put that on me just now.”

“Although you’re right, Mr. Yujin. You shouldn’t pay attention to trivial things, Mr. Yujin.”

“Then I’m not sure where I should be paying attention to…….”

“Ufu. Are you uncomfortable? Should I get off?”

“No, you aren’t that heavy so it’s fine.”

The Earl twitched and her face became flushed…… if she were a person who’d give that kind of reaction, then I wouldn’t be worrying about my life right now. There’s a chance that if it were Gia, then she may have reacted like that, but at the very least, in this current situation, the Earl of the Silver Lion only wetted her lips slightly. Her canines gave off a dull glint.

“Do you want a drink?”

The Earl got off of my stomach. Sleep had escaped me completely as well. I pulled up my upper body to sit up.

“Did it turn out well?”

“Hmhm! It’s, Good. Now, have a glass.”

The Earl, who had brought the chair and sat down on it, poured a glass of alcohol with a kettle and passed it to me. I received the shot glass with a ‘Samhyang’ logo on it, a company I’ve never heard of before.

“I’m not really good with alcohol.”

“What a booring man. You can at least have one glass, right? Drink up.”

I drank it down in one gulp. For now, since I’m in front of the Earl, I drank while maintaining etiquette.

“Ah ha? Ufu, ah ha ha ha ha. Mm. How cute. What’s up with that? You’ve

been constantly talking informally up until now, but now you're turning your head to drink?"

I silently put the shot glass down, picked up the kettle with both hands, and poured her a glass. A steady fragrance of alcohol drifted around within my mouth. Leaning back against the chair, the Earl, who was holding the shot glass with only her index finger and thumb, quickly drank the alcohol in a single gulp and let out a 'Kaah!' sound.

"Seriously, homemade alcohol is the greatest in the wooworld!"

"It tastes nice. Is it citrus wine?"

"Yes— Well, it's an alcohol made from a similar fruit that can be found in our world. It's one of the few existing specialties of my city."

"The alcohol? Or the fruit?"

"Both. Anyway, it ended well. Ah ha ha. Burned the original files, put out forged documents, and I shouted out, 'after examining the papers closely, they turned out to be fake!'. You should have seen the head office manager of the Fedchants' face! He had a confused expression on his face at first, as if he didn't know what I was saying, and then after he examined the papers, he let out a groan and glared at me! That expression! Kya hah! Ah, the best! Ah hah hah ha ha ha..... I'm getting upset from thinking about it."

"Calm down, Earl. There's no point in kicking me now."

"Mm, that's right. In any case, the documents were forged. I can't give the demolition order. The other corresponding requests for the transfer of land ownership— all of it, void! Damn it, it's regrettable that I can't send them to prison since they're outsiders."

"Is there no jurisdiction?"

"Since getting into the law of this world would be complicated, let's skip it. Well, to put it in simple terms, if they aren't one of my citizens, then I can't deem them as criminals. However, civil cases are possible! I requested for the highest amount of compensation and shouted out using words that had an ambiguous meaning, 'How dare you try to carry out such a ridiculous scheme. Don't look down on this Earl of the Silver Lioooooon!', like

that. Ah hah ha ha ha.”

I wonder if she felt delighted the more she thought about it since the Earl was drawing her face closer to me while cackling.

“It was great. That Equivalent Exchange grandma, is probably grinding her teeth right now. Strong! Invincible! The greatest! Ah ha ha. It was really great. Mr. Yujin, do you have something you want? You’re the person who gave me the idea, so I should give you a reward.”

“Send me back and don’t summon me again.”

“Pfft, kukukuku. Wrong! I can’t do that. To not let go of something once it comes into my grasp. Since I’m like that, I’m called the Earl of the Silver Lion.”

I wasn’t expecting anything, either.

“I’ll think about it.”

“I’ll tell you this now, but you can’t avoid from going to the torture rack either, okay? Ufu fufufu.”

“For some reason, it feels like an ungainly reward.”

“The thing that’s ungainly is the mistake of you having been born in a place like Korea.”

“Why is it that I have to listen to the belittlement of Korea even after having come to another world……? How were the other people’s responses?”

“Hmhm. For starters, the citizens who submitted a direct petition had a face of admiration. How was it? Then…… like the face someone makes when looking at a courageous man who had just shouted the last number during the PT exercise of guerrilla training?”

So Ahyeon served in the military, huh. Though I heard that it’s recently been a trend for the last number in a PT exercise<sup>[2]</sup> chant to be omitted.

“What’s wrong? Isn’t this the timing where you make a rebuttal by

saying ‘that’s not a look of admiration then!’?”

“It’s a deliberate omission.”

“This sort of situation is a contraction of discretionary power.”

“That feels vaguely like a civil servant gag.”

“Well, I am a civil servant, and an earl.”

“That’s right, isn’t it?”. I didn’t say, ‘In any case, congratulations.’ to her. “Just like I guessed, it seems you’re receiving quite the animosity from your citizens, huh?”

“N-N-N-Nonsense. Where else can you find a politician that’s as excellent as I, and how could someone like that be hated?”

“I made that assumption because of your self-deprecating joke just now.”

“Ahmng…… mm. What should I say-.” The Earl poured herself another glass of alcohol and sighed. “I played around too much.”

“You sure there isn’t another reason besides that?”

“There are, but, mm, those aren’t that important. Now then, let’s drink instead. Mr. Yujin, I’ll pour you a glass.”

I received the alcohol she poured with both of my hands and emptied the glass in a single gulp. Instead of trying to establish an equal standing with this series of drinks, my goal was to hammer into her the implication that ‘I was her dependent’, but I wasn’t sure if it was working well. In any case, she no longer brought up my drinking etiquette.

A moment of silence.

I poured her a glass. The Earl drank it and spoke.

“It’s not that important, but…… if I were to still say it.”

“Hm?”



“It’s probably because, of my outer appearance.”

“Outer appearance? The fact that you summon otherworldly beings and torture them?”

“Yeess. And actually, I’ve also played around with prisoners who were on death row. I was once caught by a special corps while I was doing that, though. Well, there were some circumstances to that, but anyway, I’m a part of the Twelve Sky Barriers and an aristocrat, and the opposition was a prisoner on death row, so nothing much happened.”

“Is your name, perhaps, Elizabeth Báthory?”

“Ah hah ha. That’s rude. I haven’t bathed in blood before, you know? Also, didn’t she kidnap normal citizens and play around with them too? My targets are strictly limited to death row prisoners, plus alpha, AND otherworldly beings. Yay.”

I believed that an inhabitant from an unknown world being able to casually tell the history of Earth was something to be afraid of.

“Moreover, I was meandering too much at the time. Ah ha ah…… I was immature, really.”

“Just how old were you then?”

“Hm. Around 14-years-old?”

“It’s only been 2 years.”

“Even in that short time, a girl will change. Therefore, that’s why I believe that girls are beautiful forms of life that must be protected.”

“Though I’m curious if that’s still the case when the girl has such a crude hobby like this…”

“That’s why I said, it’s my preference. Please respect it.”

“It’s not hard to respect, but I think it’s gone past the border of being considered one’s preference…….”

“Shut up.”

Silence.

Did I go too far?

I gazed at her without avoiding her gaze or flinching. A sweet aroma of alcohol, that could make a person's body freeze, came from the Earl of the Silver Lion's breath. She was displaying her canines with her tongue slightly sticking out.

“Don't act out of line, Mr. Yujin.”

That's right, it's my mistake.

Two people reached the third day. None has reached the fourth-, despite having received this information from Gia, I ended up uttering words that I didn't have to utter. Is it the influence of the two glasses of alcohol I had?

In any case, this mistake was big.

“I'm sorry.”

I said and lowered my head submissively.

“I was presumptuous.”

The Earl moistened her lips with her tongue. Silence.

“Well, you just have to not do that from now on.”

The Earl let out an ‘Ah hah ha’ laugh and patted my head. Thankfully, it seems I wasn't out in the first strike. However, regardless of that, it's certain that a considerable amount of points were removed.

While I was grinding my teeth in vexation, the Earl of the Silver Lion continued our previous conversation.

“No matter what world it is, the public are people who judge people by their outer appearance, aren't they? Of course, there's my mistake as well and I can't make any excuses about that, but for them to go as far as to

worry about completely useless things and despising someone for it, that's a bit troubling even for me. That kind of feeling."

"They'll feel anxious, after all."

"That's the thing that's needless. I'm already well aware of the system of society. I can't go against 12 people at once, and since I know that, I won't do something similar to what Elizabeth Báthory did. Though I'll continue to play around with prisoners who are on death row."

"Do you resent them?"

"Should I call it resentment- something like, tiring? Even this incident, if the Fedchants didn't try to pull off such a ridiculous scheme, then I would have just accepted it. The documents were perfect, after all. People who would normally avoid me, but would come clinging to me and call me their ruler when in these types of situations, I honestly see these people as unseemly."

"You'll need time."

"That time, I don't need it. *Understand?*"

I didn't say anything more.

That seemed to be the right answer. The Earl, who sipped on her glass as if waiting for a reply, lowered her glass and grinned.

"How great would it be if the people also had a sense that was as quick as yours?"

"Mm."

"Anyway, who knows? While I'm in this position, I'm an earl. Since I was handed down this role from my father. I'll take care of them at the very least. I don't want to let go of this position either. I can spend my time messing around, I have a torture chamber, and I can play around with prisoners on death row and all I'll receive are cold gazes. Also, having a base is important. However, that's it. That's everything. The End! I don't plan to do anything more than this. Live on your own-and on your own, die. Ah hah hah ha ha ha!"

“What an outrageous Her Lordship, Earl…….”

“Even when I was little, I pondered whether this kind of earl could possibly exist. It was something that even I believed would have an incredibly low chance of possibly happening. But then it actually happened.”

For some reason, I feel like I can almost grasp that Ahyeon guy’s character now.

“And thus, another trial popped up today as weell.”

After chuckling, ‘Mufufu’, the Earl lifted up her glass. Then, after waiting for me to fill up her glass, she used the pinky of her other hand to stir her drink for a moment before sticking it out towards me.

I obediently licked it. After I did so, I tilted my head and the Earl gave a sullen laugh.

“There’s a maid. She committed theft. That’s it.”

“Was she caught in the act?”

“She was caught by the guards so, probably. It’s something that happened just a short while ago. They said they caught her going through the drawers in my deceased mother’s room. They went through her clothing and, oh dear, a bunch of jewelry appeared.”

“According to the law, how will she be punished?”

“If they’re a noble, then I can charge them for three times the appropriate price. However, since she’s a commoner, I can do something like cut off one of her arms. Making her pay 3 times the amount of what she was about to steal is, of course, also possible. A great masterpiece. Ah hah ha ha.”

Although this girl truly seemed to be enjoying herself while laughing and clapping.

“Then what’s the issue?”

“Mm? When did I say, that there’s a problem, Mr. Yujin?”

“You didn’t.”

“Then why are you saying something cocky like that?”

“All I did was listen to the girl, who came to visit me in the middle of the night, make complaints while drinking alcohol, still look rather upset despite all that ranting, and speak her mind about her annoyance towards the public before suddenly bringing up another trial.”

The Earl, didn’t show any easily readable body gesture like biting her lips.

A momentary silence.

I asked her first.

“Was it a person you adored?”

“Weeell.”

“A feeling of betrayal?”

“Something like that?”

I tried reconstructing what must have occurred. The Earl of the Silver Lion was able to suppress the Fedchant’s scheme. Although the Earl claimed that she merely wanted to show the Fedchants their place and that the civilians didn’t matter, it’s clear that the last line was nothing more than something which she added later on. This 16-year-old girl most likely wanted for her people, who had a prejudice towards her, to reevaluate her once more. However, the things which she received- was still prejudice, ostracization, and fear.

The feeling of having cold water poured on you, albeit, she probably didn’t feel anything…… I’m certain that her mood has become as worse as the amount of authority she had to use. And during that situation, this incident occurred. Of all things, why did it have to be the jewelry of her deceased mother, and of all people, why did it have to be the fellow that she doted on? If that’s the case, then, of course, she would be depressed. It felt as if I could almost hear her say ‘This is why, I don’t want to do something like be nice towards the people below me.’.

I had also lost my sight for a moment. If you think about it, the fact that she came to me with alcohol while wearing pajamas(Probably means that it's still the middle of the night outside) was already a huge indicator, but for me to have almost tried to lecture her. That's no different than stepping on a landmine after having behaved conceitedly.

However.

“What do you plan to do?”

“Hm? It's not something that Mr. Yujin needs to really care about, though?”

That's a lie. If that was the case, then you wouldn't have brought all this up in the first place, is something I didn't say to her. In truth, I didn't say anything. A deliberate omission.

The Earl of the Silver Lion replied.

“She's tied up, in the torture room.”

And, laughed.

“I won't kill her. She's not a citizen of another world, but this world, this home world of ours. A citizen with civil rights. It'd be a bit much if she were to die just for having committed theft. But I'll have to at least take one of her arms and receive the compensation fee from her body directly. I plan to make her into a one-armed slave maid that'll work for the Earl's House until the day she dies. Ah hah ha ha. Of course, since the amount of jewelry that was discovered on her was rather significant, if it's three times that amount, then it's not a price that can be paid off even if a one-armed maid worked for the rest of her life. Her descendants will have to carry the debt, too. If she resists, then we'll have to bind her and force her to get pregnant throughout the night. Ah hah ha ha…….”

That laughter was truly cruel and- and,

What- should I say?

“Do you want to go and see it? It's a contraption that you might end up being bound to as well, you know? If you ask what it is, then it's something

where you wrap a wire-like thing around the arm. And then puuuuuuuuuuull! If you pull on it, the wire will dig into the flesh just like that. You then leave it in that state. Once a day or two passes, that area will rot and the arm will fall off. It can do other things, too…….”

“You asked if there’s something I wanted, right?”

“Hm?” The Earl tilted her head for a moment before folding her arms.  
“Aha. Ah, that. Yeah. Why?”

“Can you follow my advice for this case?”

“Ha? You’re saying presumptuous words again.”

“Though that may be the case, you said you’ll give me a reward. If I can’t prevent myself from going to the torture room and you won’t send me home, then at least something like this…… is what I mean. Is that not possible?”

The Earl knitted her brow and looked at me. Since she didn’t reply immediately, I spoke.

“For what reason did that girl resort to stealing?”

“Is a reason needed?”

“Would a maid working for the Earl resort to theft without reason?”

“Such things are common in this world.”

“Even if it’s common in this world, it’d be difficult to do to the Earl of the Silver Lion. You said that your cruelty is already widespread.”

But if someone were to resort to stealing from that type of person, while shouldering that risk, then there would be a motive. That’s what I meant. The Earl snorted.

“Well, it’s cliché. I’m sorry, Lord Earl. My mother became bedridden. I needed the money for medicine. I’m unable to say something if I were to die, but if I’m gone, then there’ll be no one to support my mother…… so on and so forth, etc etc.”

“Is that the truth?”

“Yeess.”

“Just how much does the medicine cost…… to make someone try and steal one-third of an amount that can’t be paid off even if they worked for the rest of their life?”

“Mm. The field of medicine is managed by a faction called Alchemy Fortress, but, ah, in Korean terms they’d be the Pharmaceutical Association, but since the Alchemy Fortress is on a global-scale, price-fixing is severe.”

“That doesn’t make sense. Medicine is directly connected to survival. If something like that’s sold at an exorbitant price, then…….”

“Ah, of course, medicine is at a fixed price that’s within the range of common sense. If it really were at an exorbitant price, like what you assumed, then something like the Alchemy Fortress would have disappeared a long time ago.”

“Then what? Is it really just made up words?”

“The reason that’s not it…… is because she gave the exact name of the medicine. The reason why the Alchemy Fortress is able to establish its position right now is because, through the sharing of their know-hows, they’re able to provide vaccines for almost every pathogen in the world and they set the price for those vaccines…… you probably wouldn’t understand even if I tell you this.”

“One line summary : It’s a rare disease, so it’s expensive.”

“Yeess.”

“Therefore, the circumstances are true.”

“Yeess.”

“According to the law, is it necessary for you to cut off one of her arms? Or do you not have to cut it off?”



“I don’t have to. It’s at my discretion. It’s just that I want to cut it off. Thus, I’m cutting off one of her arms because I want to cut it off.”

“You don’t have to emphasize it. Okay. Then the measures you have to take is clear.”

Organizing the incident : Government(Earl of the Silver Lion) vs Citizen.  
A criminal case. Theft with a motive.

“Make her pay three times the value of the jewelry that was found on her.”

“I’m fine with that.”

“Don’t cut off her arm.”

“I don’t like that idea that much.”

“And, buy the medicine for that maid’s mother. You can do that much, can’t you, Your Excellency the Earl?”

“Okay, now that’s genuine nonsense- Why do I have to do that, Mr. Yujin? I’m, as my title says, the Earl, Mr. Yujin.”

“I said this before. If this is possible to do in place of my reward.”

Silence.

“.....Haa. Even if that was possible, I was planning to provide you with daily necessities like a blanket or something so you could spend your time here a bit more pleasantly. But, what could you possibly gain by throwing all that away and saving a maid that you’ve never met before, who’s also from a world that isn’t yours?”

I,

didn’t tell her that it was because of her laughing appearance earlier, that- she sincerely appeared cruel,

and ‘in pain’.

“I don’t think I have to answer that.”

“Answer it.”

“Let me off. It’s not something hypocritical, and it’s not for that maid who I’ve never met before, either, like you assumed.”

It’s not for you, either.

“It’s simply because I know that my chances of being dragged to the torture chamber increase if you’re in pain, annoyed, or upset.”

I only want to avoid that.

“Ultimately, it’s just my own selfishness.”

I’m not sure how the Earl took in my calmly spoken words. I don’t have the ability to do something like reading other people’s minds.

Silence.

The Earl avoided my gaze.

“The medicine, is expensive.”

“You’re an earl, aren’t you? Do you not have enough money?”

“I’m saying that it’s not a small sum that I can just give out as charity!”

“Then make the maid repay the price of the medicine as well. It should be fine then.

“Then wouldn’t the payback period get extended too much?”

“Then you’ll obtain that much of a devoted servant. Don’t you want that? Furthermore, your opinion among the masses will go up a bit, too. Don’t you dislike being looked at coldly all the time?”

When it felt like the Earl was going to go silent again…… she let out a sigh.

“That’s too lenient.”

She then clicked her tongue and started scratching the back of her head.

“The authority of the law won’t stand then. How could someone overlook a thieving criminal just because of their circumstance and also give them charity? If you look at it like that, then do other people not have their own circumstances? For example, since Gia is stupid, no, well, she actually is an idiot, in any case, does Gia work and receive a salary because she’s an idiot? What about the other maids? They work hard, and gather money. If that doesn’t work, then by going through proper procedures, they borrow money and solve their problems. If you’re a member of society, then that’s fundamental. If you go against that fundamental, then you’re no longer a member of society. A price must be paid.”

“Is that amount of compensation not enough?”

“It isn’t insufficient, but it’s like this. If the incident ends like that, then the lesson given to the others will be, ‘Ah, it’s fine if I don’t get caught for stealing, and even if I do get caught, it’ll be fine after I pay a fine’. Then it’s over. A group that believes that it’s safe to go against regulation will, without a doubt, collapse.”

“I agree. That’s why you need to nail in the fact that only this occasion will be an exception.”

“An exception…….”

“You do something like a morning assembly, right?”

The Earl shut her mouth and nodded her head. I continued.

“Gather every single employee and tell them this.”

“Tell them what?”

“I’ll write it down, Earl. A pen and paper, please.”



**I, the daughter of the Murky Lion and the Blizzard Grave, the**

one allowed the Silver Crown and the Green orb, the honorable ruler of the City of Confinement, the Earl of the Silver Lion, believe that the dishonorable occurrence that occurred last night to be regrettable. I anguished a countless number of times while contemplating about this incident, but after careful consideration, I have gathered you all here in order to deal with this issue while hoping to prevent even a single question or doubt from remaining in your minds after this case has been resolved.

First, the story that I've been told.

This guard standing before me witnessed the maid while she was in the act of stealing and apprehended her. An appropriate reward will be given to him due to his courageous action.

This maid has admitted her crimes of stealing. Moreover, she has confessed that she had no other choice because she needed the money for her mother's medicine. After having people investigate the matter, it was reported that her situation was indeed true, and after further investigation, this maid could have stolen more, but it was confirmed that she had later returned the jewelry that could have been sold for more than the price needed for the medicine. Thus, though it is certain that she took such actions because of her beautiful devotion towards her mother,

It is not enough.

No matter the reason, if that action does harm towards others, then it cannot be pardoned. That is the rule of society where people live. The harm for this incident is not strictly limited to the monetary problem I may receive, but the relative sense of loss that the others must shoulder due to such actions. Are you all receiving a wage because you are dumb, do you make a savings because you are pathetic, and are you all working because you are impudent?

You can say that it is an occurrence that happened abruptly while in a situation where one didn't have enough savings.

**However, it's still the same. You can borrow money. You can beg for money. If all else fails, then you could have come to me. Yes, to me-. The thing that upsets me the most is the fact that this pitiable thief, didn't consider to rely on me even once. In conclusion, although she may have begged to me in the end, that was after everything had already been ruined on her own, with a kneeling body that had already been detained.**

**This maid is, unbelievably foolish. That is all, and the story ends there.**

**.....Although it should end there.**

**On the other hand, it may have been my own mistake.**

**To state clearly, I have not been able to show the image of a sincere and reliable leader to you all. Most likely, it is because of that reason that this maid was unable to rely on me.**

**If there's something to consider, then it's solely that. However, I admit that that issue in itself is a significant problem.**

**Heed my words.**

**This maid will have to pay back 3 times the amount of what she tried to steal. Head deity of the house, Sophna, please record this on the documents.**

**Furthermore, Sophna, this is the Earl's order. Take the money from the vault, buy the medicine that was mentioned by the maid, and deliver that medicine to her mother. The price of the medicine, will, of course, be added onto to the maid's debt.**

**No interest shall be attached to these two debts. Until the debt has been paid off, it shall be passed down generation after generation. Excluding complete reimbursement, bankruptcy and any type of abrogation will not be acknowledged.**

**There will be no punishment besides that.**

**That is my, the Earl's, verdict.**

**However, honorable citizens of the City of Confinement, be aware of this, I am not doing an act of charity towards this maid, herself. This maid does not have good luck, either. Nor is this on my own personal whim. In truth, I am merely using this opportunity to execute an idea that I have had since a long time ago. With this action, I am tossing aside the debt that you all were bearing.**

**Now the debt from the time I was an undependable leader is gone. You and I, will stand squarely.**

**If, perhaps, you ignore these words and rely on the luck and mercy that never existed in the first place, then at that time, I will make an inquiry to the flesh and internal organs of the person directly involved by the means of iron and flames.**

**I, as the individual to have received the 12th glass from His Majesty.**

**I, as the lord of the City of Confinement.**

**I, as your sovereign.**

**I am the Earl of the Silver Lion.**



“It was impressive.”

Gia Batsand came down and said that to me, who was in the middle of investigating the torture chamber.

“Mm, how should I say it? It’s seriously something that can only be described as exceptional’s excellent.”

“You know that?”

“While feeling the casualty’s death at twilight’s darkness, the breeze’s wind that blows from the west’s west…”[\[3\]](#)

You’ve even memorized it!? it’s probably the timing to give this kind of rebuttal, but I won’t.

“Referentially, if I say it in our world’s language, *Ziora’ en senteauzi Korans’ en Neod*…”

“Stop it. So what happened?”

“I’ll explain it in a calm and orderly fashion. Her Excellency the Earl somewhat spitefully left the maid neglected in the torture chamber until morning. Only until it became time for the morning assembly, did she then bring the maid back up without saying a single word.”

“Okay.”

“Her Excellency the Earl’s ruthlessness is infamous. This morning assembly, the assembled employees were all trembling with anxiety. The majority of the maids were close to tears. One of the maids, who was close to the maid who was captured, tried to jump in front of the Earl, but the other maids were holding her back. It was that kind of situation. Whether she Her Excellency the Earl read the mood or not, she started her speech.”

She most likely didn’t give the speech while holding onto a piece of paper. The reason why she left the maid neglected until morning was probably

because she needed that time to memorize. She's a fellow who's smart enough to know the difference between the effects of reading off of a piece of paper and speaking impromptu.

"The guard, who apprehended the maid, kept his head turned away from the other maids. It seems he became nervous for a moment when he was mentioned in Her Excellency the Earl's speech, but after hearing her latter words of being promised a reward, he nodded his head with a twitching expression on his face."

Reward and punishment are certainly a basis of governing.

"The speech then went on to the maid. Though it seems the maid felt an instant of hope as she listened to Her Excellency the Earl talk about her circumstance, Her Excellency cut off that hope by looking down at the maid coldly and saying that it isn't enough to be an excuse. The despairing maid lowered her head, and as she listened to Her Excellency the Earl speak further, her already fallen head dropped further, and the Earl's words made a face of realization appear on the gathered employees' faces."

"Well, those were just things the Earl said herself, which I wrote down after organizing the detail a bit..... And then?"

"The moment the maid, who had become ragged after having been cut down by a stern and sound argument, was about to give up on all hope, Her Excellency the Earl, at that moment, made a turnabout. She had a modest appearance, an appearance where you couldn't find even a slight glimpse of her usual arrogance or mischievousness."

"Mm."

"It was so humble, that I nearly recalled that one Ben-Hur scene."

"What kind of scene is that? Nevermind. You don't have to overstrain yourself with this, I'll give tackles sometimes, okay?"

"Is that so? I'm relieved."

"What happened next?"

"The judgment continued. The apprehended maid listened as if she



couldn't believe what she was hearing, before finally, tears started to flow down her eyes. That other maid, who she was close to, started to cry 'huaaang' in the arms of the maids who were holding that maid back at first. Mm, was it 'hukengkeng' instead of 'huaaang'?"

"Huaaang is probably right. Huaaang."

"No, no matter how much I think about it, it feels like it was probably 'ugyagya'."

"What kind of person cries like that—!?"

"I'm truly relieved."

"Get on with it."

"After that, the sight of Her Excellency the Earl reflecting on herself and being resolved for a new start, when she was giving that final warning that was natural at that point, even my chest started to feel warm. It became so hot that I can still feel the heat right now. Though, if it's now, I could ride the mood and let you touch it."

"Okay, then let me."

"Mm? Ah..... that, uh....."

"I'm joking."

"..... Are you, really?"

"I've said it many times now, but I don't like things that are too stimulating. It's just that I'm a boy who's in his third year of high school, and I can at least humor someone to this extent. That's why you should refrain from doing body gags. If a girl does something like that, then you'll only feel regret when you grow up."

"Is that so? Those are incredibly helpful words."

"Then that's a relief. I'm saying this again, but, it's a joke, so can you let go of my collar? No, don't shake me. Let me go."

“Pardon me.”

There was a moment of time to adjust my clothes.

“Was there any applause after her final declaration?”

“It was literally a ★pulverizing★royal seal★tremendous ovation. It was a situation where it wouldn’t have been strange if banners with ★★★★★Silver Lion Earl of Victory★★★★★ written on them and glowsticks were to appear.”

“What kind of situation is that…… No, I have a rough guess, but…… how was the Earl?”

Gia Batsand didn’t immediately respond to the question. After letting out a ‘Hmm’ and touching her chin, she gave me a sidelong glance with her blue eyes.

“I’ll tell you about that later. Except, once her speech was over and Her Excellency was on her way out, she furtively said something to only me. That you wrote that speech.”

“Hm.”

“What, are you?”

“Hm?”

“I’m asking you what your true identity is. Were you a politician? Or a novelist?”

“No way. I’m merely a normal 19-year-old boy.”

“But it was so well written that it’s difficult to believe that a normal student had written it.”

“Like I said, 19-years-old. If you’re going to take an essay-type exam after entering your third year of high school, then you need to at least be able to write like that.”

“An essay-type exam, is it? Now that I think about it, Ahyeon was good

at writing too. Do you guys train essay writers on a national level?"

"No, even I, who lived there for 19 years, am clueless when it comes to that country's policy of education..... If you ask if there's another requisite outside of that, then, mm, the fact that I've written publicity texts and speeches for the student body president election?"

Though I've written things like that almost every day since I was in my second year of middle school, I have to say that my greatest masterpiece was the kick-off speech I wrote when I was 18-years-old. The speech that started with 〈My friends of Samwon High School〉.

In order to go against Joo Chanmi's speech that started off with 〈I will say this〉, it had to be at that level.

"In any case, it wasn't difficult.", after wrapping it up like that, I added. "I said it before, right? I didn't make her say things that didn't exist in the first place."

"Mm?"

"The Earl most likely, no, most certainly wanted to say those words. But you know as well. She's clever but her personality is bad. Therefore, she's unable to express herself properly. Even if you say the same words, it'll come out differently if you say it either logically or sarcastically."

"Hmm."

"Thus, all I did was smooth out the thoughts that the Earl usually had into more comprehensible terms. I didn't stack up words from zero, either. So I haven't done anything."

Gia went silent as if she was lost deep in thought, and then,

"I think I roughly understand the situation. I also understand the behavior that Her Excellency the Earl is showing right now."

"What is she doing?"

"She shut herself in her room. She said her head hurts too much."

Mm.

“Are you sure it isn’t a hangover?”

“How many shots did she drink?”

“Who knows? Around three or four?”

“I recall that Her Excellency’s drinking capacity is ten times more than that.”

“Then she was probably hard pressed on that particular day.”

Gia brushed her chin and gazed at me. I didn’t ask anything more about it.

“Was it good?”

“Who knows? I don’t really enjoy alcohol that much…….”

“For what joy do you live?”

“Did I commit a mistake that’s big enough to have my joy of living considered unjust?”

“A capital offense. Since we’re coincidentally in the torture room, let’s enforce your punishment immediately-.”

“Please. I can’t really take that as a joke.”

Gia seemed to have realized that as well. She meekly lowered her head.

“Sorry.”

“Mm.”

“As a symbol of apology, this Heaven Brand milk.”

“I won’t drink it. No, stop squeezing it. Seriously. I said I won’t drink it. Don’t pass it to me. You drink it.”

“It’s delicious.”

“Whether it’s delicious or not, don’t force it onto me. Both master and servant are perverts.”

Gia laughed. I let out a sigh.

“Anyway.”, with a serious voice, I continued my words. “I guess we can see this as my win for the bet.”

Gia nodded her head. That must have been one of the reasons why she came down here, anyway.

“You haven’t entered into the fourth day yet, but since Her Excellency the Earl is in that state, she most likely won’t come down here anymore today. I’m not sure what the Earl will do to you later on, but with a single time as the limit, I will prevent her from doing that one thing to you.”

I succeeded in putting Shahryar to sleep for another day. I triumphed in breaching the impregnable 4th day. In addition to that, I’ve gained a 1UP…… even if I say it like this, my mood doesn’t get better.

“Yujin.”

I overcame my dejection and raised my head. The blue haired and blue eyed girl was sitting on a nearby table and spoke.

“I, am thankful towards you.”

Silence.

“That’s because, the thing that I witnessed today-was the figure of the earl, that I’ve long yearned for.”

Silence.

“I told you, right? That Her Excellency the Earl wasn’t originally like this. Even back when Ahyeon was around, the earl was, well, she was still haughty to an incorrigible degree, but it wasn’t as bad as now. Within her actions back then, there was…….” Gia paused for a lengthy moment as she tried to figure out the right word. “That’s right, there was a ‘light’.”

“Light, is it?”

“Yup. At that time, we really did have fun…….”

Like she was remembering a golden age from a long time ago that’ll never return-

“We read manga, read BL, watched anime, watched BL, played games, and played BL. At the time, since both Her Excellency and I could cross over worlds, by grabbing onto Ahyeon and canceling his summon, we were able to go to Korea and try out the thing called the internet. I especially had fun at btool<sup>[4]</sup>. Really, our faithfulness at the time is indescribable. Especially the BL part.”

Though it somehow became an absurdly despicable golden age, I gave up on making a rebuttal.

The ‘at the time’ part bothered me.

“But that faithful time ended up breaking apart.”

“What happened exactly?”

“A lot happened…… but the fact that they all came at once was the issue. There was a problem revolving around Ahyeon and several problems with other things, as well. However, if I were to bring up the biggest incident among those, then it’ll probably have to be the kidnapping.”

“The Earl was?”

That earl, was once in the same state as I am currently-?

“That’s right. Her Excellency the Earl was kidnapped. On the surface, it was a cooperation request to study her ability. It was ordered by the Mage Tower.”

“So the Earl’s ability really is rare.”

“More than that. Being a member of the Odd Sky Barriers means that they’re one of the six special individuals in the world that possess that kind of incredible ability. Also, even that ability’s limit……mm, is nearly non-

existent, literally a Universal Summoner. Although this world has quite the long history, no one with the same ability as Her Excellency has ever existed, and I believe that there'll never be another one in the future."

Indeed, if that type of ability was common, then the border between worlds would have been broken a long time ago. Furthermore, a countless number of things that become possible with this ability were coming to mind right now, and most likely, the reason why she was kidnapped was probably because of one of those capabilities.

"Did the Earl not try to resist?"

"She didn't plan to go obediently, but since her opponent was, at the time, the 7th branch manager of the Mage Tower, the Second Sky Barrier of the Twelve Sky Barriers, Sky Prison, it was no different from her having absolutely no authority. Rather, instead of having none, she just couldn't. Different from the Odd Sky Barriers that Her Excellency the Earl is a part of, the members of the Even Sky Barriers are decided purely by power."

"Was the earl unable to escape even with her ability?"

"There was a circumstance and they had a hostage. A situation where the hostage would die if she tried anything rash or escaped. Also, including her clothes, she had everything that could possibly be a catalyst taken away from her and had to spend her time not being able to move an inch. Even if it's Her Excellency the Earl, she wasn't able to show a bold front."

".....Even if it's the earl, is it?"

"Since it's a given that a single person can't take on 12. Be it the treatment that was enforced onto her afterward, or what that Sky Prison Earl tried to do with Her Excellency's ability, if we go into that topic, then it'll get too long so I'll stop here. A lot of things happened, I'll leave it at that. By this time, Her Excellency's parents both passed away, and she succeeded the house, but..... Anyway, Her Excellency summoned a monster and destroyed the 7th branch of the Mage Tower. No, it would be more appropriate to say that, while using the chaos that broke out in the 7th branch of the Mage Tower because of the summoned monster, she escaped. Afterward, the monster demolished the 7th branch of the Mage Tower on its own volition."

“.....”

“The monster didn’t stop after that and ended up completely swallowing the entire city and created the labyrinth known as the Six Petal City. If you ask around, then you’ll find out that the monster still hasn’t been killed and that it’s alive and well, slaughtering the adventurers that arrive aiming for the relics of the 7th branch of the Mage Tower, showing off its robustness.”

What a tremendous story.....

“I’m digressing, but after that incident, Her Excellency the Earl devised a plan to protect herself since no one could be certain that something like that wouldn’t happen again. The rings and bracelets that Her Excellency wears, have you seen them?”

“Yeah. She was definitely still wearing them despite being in her pajamas.”

“The reason why the term ‘wearing’ is misleading, is because they’re actually attached to her bones. Unless you cut them off, they’ll never be detached from Her Excellency. Moreover, there are beings from the twelve worlds within those accessories; heteromorphic devas, demon lords of ancient times, and extraterrestrial monarchs..... if even one is summoned, then they’re capable of completely devastating this world and then some. The pieces of life from those beings are contained within her rings and bracelets.”

“So they’re catalysts that can be carried around at all times, huh. Is the earl able to control them?”

“That’s impossible. However, summoning, the act of bringing them here, is always possible..... that’s it.”

I understood. (Do not try to kidnap me again. Don’t screw around with me. It’s fine if you try to assassinate me, however, you’ll have to kill me in an instant. If you aren’t able to do that, then this world that you’re standing on top of will be destroyed. Even if I die along with it, I’ll destroy this world.) If I were to make a comparison, then a suicide squad with dynamite wrapped around them. No, in this case, it’d be a nuclear bomb.



“It means she was wounded that much. She has changed to the point where she’d take such defensive measures. And…… well…… mm, there were more things that happened after that.”

“And thus we arrived at today?”

Gia nodded her head. She was smiling slightly.

“That’s why I was happy. The fact that the earl showed such a demeanor and the fact that you broke my expectation and made it to the fourth day.”

“……I just want to live.”

That’s why I’m doing my utmost. That’s really it.

“Yujin. You somehow resemble Ahyeon.”

“Wait a second. Those are unforgivable words. I’ll summarize everything I’ve learned about that Ahyeon guy. Approximated to have served in the military, an incorrigible otaku, likes BL, addicted to the internet, and addicted to gaming. How could I possibly be similar to that kind of guy?”

“If I have to say it, then it’s the fact that you’re both Korean.”

“I can’t deny that……!?”

“Mm. Good. That was truly a good tsukkomi.”

Please, just call it a rebuttal or a tackle.

Gia quietly laughed again and stood up.

Although that smile felt unbalanced with her cold face, the indescribable gloom that came off of her smile didn’t align well with this location especially. Regardless, the fact that it stuck out because of that sense of unbalance was also true.

With a nod.

That otherworldly female knight that stuck out, spoke after lowering her head.

“Please help Her Excellency the Earl.”

I, was unable to say something.

“Also, please return the BL novel that I dropped yesterday.”

That’s easy.



And thus.

The conversation ended. Gia Batsand went back and I continued my investigation of the torture chamber.

The following are the results of today’s investigation.

First, there were four otherworldly life forms bound in the torture room. A large frog, an angel, a beastman that resembled a wolf, and a girl with cat ears.

Second, it’s obvious, but none of them could understand Korean.

Third, nearly all of them had lost the light in their eyes. Especially the wolf-like beastman and the giant frog, they were in a state where they could no longer be fixed. If there’s something that was possible, then it was a merciful death.

Fourth, that’s why…… I allowed the two to rest.

The beastman was unable to leave any last words, but the frog left behind the following will, ‘K–toro–kukuru’. The day I understand the meaning will most likely come. It doesn’t matter if it doesn’t, either. At the very least, I’ll remember those last words.

During the fourth and final step, I first took the two ropes that were lying around and successfully hid something similar to a small blade within the torture rack, which most likely became loose due to its frequent usage. I had used that blade to put the two creatures to rest. Other than that, there

was a cup that seemed to be used to contain the Heaven Brand milk, but there was no value in investigating that.

The reason why I put those two to rest was because only they were ‘in a situation where it wouldn’t be weird if they died’. Simply because I could do it without being suspected. I thought that if I had done it to any of the others, then there was a chance that I would get caught by the earl. And then what would the earl do? A person who hates when people act out of line. It’s obvious what she will do.

In the end, I, am this cowardly.

Gia Batsand.

You may have requested, for me to help the earl.

That she’s someone who can be helped, in all respects.

There’s nothing above, what I’m capable of.

## Footnotes

1. [\[↑\]](#) The term ‘**sleep paralysis**’ can be literally read as ‘**pressed by scissors**’.
2. [\[↑\]](#) The PT exercise that was mentioned earlier is something often done in the Korean military. I’m not sure if it’s done in other countries, but yeah. It’s like a warm-up exercise where you do jumping jacks, push-ups, squats, etc. You have to count out loud each time you do the action, but you HAVE to omit the last number. If you don’t, then the drill sergeant will make everyone do the exercise again, but with increased intensity. So the sergeant can tell everyone to do 20 jumping jacks, but if someone says the last number, they do another 30 jumping jacks. It’ll keep going up until everyone succeeds in not saying the last number. So anyone who does say it will be stared daggers at.
3. [\[↑\]](#) This is a poem that became popular online because of how nonsensical it was. It’s basically using a ‘[Korean word for excellent]’s excellent’, type of format. The latter words are written in Konglish, which are English words using Korean letters to write them. Just think of it like, “The cute’s kawaii is amazing’s sugoi.”
4. [\[↑\]](#) Btool is an internet community that uploaded a lot of BL images.



‘The Princess of Death’, Cha Minhee was a girl whom the term ‘blazing transfer student’ fitted perfectly for. ‘Ey, the hell is this!?’ she created a disturbance on the very first day she was transferred here. ‘Ah, I wanted to just live quietly, but whoever’s the boss of this class, c’mere, you’re a bunch of lacking dimwits.’ The reason was me. ‘These bastards. Do ya got nothin’ better to do? Sittin’ around and bullyin’ a pitiful kid. I’ll fix those rotten heads of yours, be ready for it, alright!?’ before lunch time could even end on her first day here, she had already subdued our entire class. ‘Not even a bite. You guys are only good at flappin’ your lips.’ The scenery of her dusting her hand while having a bunch of fallen kids as her background, I recall that scene to having been truly beautiful. [\[1\]](#)

‘And what are you?’

Minhee was dissatisfied with me as well. ‘You’ve become a young adult, but do you not have a temper? The hell are ya lickin’ somethin’ just because someone tells you to? You crazy?’. I don’t remember how I answered her. Needless to say, I probably said something pathetic that didn’t need to be described since Minhee was glaring at me with an expression on her face that appeared as if she was looking at someone pitiable. And as such, on that day, no, during the time that Minhee was around, as if even my own existence didn’t exist-the only things I remember are Minhee, Minhee’s appearance, and Minhee’s voice.

‘Let’s go, I’ll buy you somethin’ delicious.’

The words that Minhee said.

‘Stop shrivelin’ up. Did you commit a crime or somethin’? What’s wrong?’

Minhee’s scent.

‘Ahahaha! Were you always this interestin’? I completely didn’t know.’

The memories made with Minhee.

‘I dare you guys to try doin’ the same thing again. Friends are supposed to get along, right? You punks.’

Although Chanmi was in a different class at the time, there was no way

she would stay still after having heard the news from someone else. A counterattack, using people. However, Cha Minhee was literally too powerful for something like that to work. 'Are ya messin' with me, you guys? Come quickly. I'll take care of you all in a flash.' The only thing that remained on the side of the street were sprawled out people.

'Are ya the boss?'

Minhee wasn't slow in understanding the situation, either. It didn't take long before she was standing in front of the final boss, Chanmi.

'For someone with such a smooth face, you're quite wicked, ain't ya?'

I remember Chanmi's face at the time, too. A face that I never expected she would ever make. Minhee struck Chanmi's face strong enough to make an audible Slap! sound.

'Lower your eyes, you thorn.'

Chanmi didn't comply. On the contrary, she struck Minhee's cheek in return. Slap! Minhee retaliated. Slap! In the end, due to the strike that was given by Chanmi, who was clenching her teeth, the real fight had begun. 'Oh, so you know how to do this, huh? Okay, come at me.' That was, as a type of Ragnarok which was capable of reducing our entire class to ashes, literally a war of Gods. If there were someone, who was knowledgeable in martial arts, present at the time, then they would have been able to explain what kind of techniques Chanmi used, and what Minhee did in order to counterattack, but unfortunately, I didn't have that sort of knowledge at the time. From boxing to judo, to capoeira, to taekkyeon, and all the way to a flat out reckless brawl, I could only say that the fight appeared like an extravagant, no-rules match, mixed martial arts championship.

'Not even a challenge.'

And that fight, ended in Minhee's victory. Contrary to her spoken words, Minhee was also thoroughly injured. Regardless, a win was a win.

The school was turned over.

She was the esteemed daughter of the Joo Group conglomerate, a genius girl, a girl who was boasted as being the most elegant, most beautiful, most

intelligent, and most powerful by the school. That child, was beaten, into a pulp. She was beaten up by a delinquent transfer student who had come up from the countryside.

Money started to move. The result of the fight was edited, denied, downsized, and exaggerated. Money, money, money was moved here and there. A plan was devised by powerful authority figures. The police ended up being called. The trap was incredibly elaborate and thorough, saying that she would have to go to a juvenile prison instead of a Youth Detention Center.

I couldn't watch her go.

First and foremost, I can't let Minhee, my Goddess, the girl whose hair fluttered like flames when blown by the wind, go. That's impossible.

I moved. I, who didn't do anything despite having been beaten for 4 years straight and humiliated, moved. Not for myself, but in order to save a single girl.

I destroyed,

'You......'

their plan.

It was simple. No matter how much money and authority was poured into their plan, it was still baseless text that was built up from zero. It was a disguised truth. Although it appeared sturdy on the surface, a loose string was still present. I didn't miss out on that opening and stabbed a blade of logic created from information into that gap. The lie was destroyed.

'I guess I'm in your debt now......'

Minhee's fragrance.

'The hell? Go away, you thorn.'

Joo Chanmi experienced a physical loss, and adding to that, she felt a mental loss as well. However, I, and probably Minhee too, was no longer interested in her. Something like a Joo Group conglomerate or a prodigy



girl, who cares about that?

The relationship between Minhee and I deepened. ‘Church? Don’t go to someplace like that and come over to my place instead! Our house is a temple, a temple. I’ll give ya some rice cakes, they’re good.’ I went to play. ‘Excuse me, I’m Yujin’s girlfriend.’ She came to play. ‘Yujin, ain’t your head really good? My head’s terrible, so I’m worried.’ Towards the girl who was worried about her grades. ‘You’ll teach me!? It’s fine, jeez. Put that away. I’m not the learning type, anyway……’, the girl grumbled and refused my offer. ‘I-I said to put it away! Ah, jeez…… o-okay, I get it. I just have to do it, right? Seriously…… this weakling.’ We studied. ‘You, don’t tell me, you’re actually thinking of somethin’ lewd?’. Minhee.

‘This……uh, for you to think of me whenever I’m not around.’

I received prayer beads.

Minhee. Aah. Minhee.

If this were some type of game or romance novel, then it would have ended there. However, there are no stops in reality. There were other things moving in the background. Chanmi, who we had broken once, had done something, though I’m not certain what that something was. Regardless, one day, dozens of unidentified assailants appeared before us on our way home.

I still remember the fight that occurred then. Several adult men rushed towards us and swung their fists. They didn’t take it easy because we were kids, and they weren’t lenient just because she was a girl. If two fell, then three came. If three fell, then four came. For weapons, they had metal pipes, chains, knives, and even guns. Even if her strength transcended common sense, in the end, she was nothing more than a 14-year-old girl. Although Minhee was able to put up a good fight, that was it.

Minhee fell.

Violence continued to pour down onto her.

A physical, violence. A violence, that a girl couldn’t possibly bear.

The reason why I wasn’t able to witness anything after that was because

I had lost consciousness.

The happy times. I who believed that I could assist her with my brain. I who believed that I could protect her. However, I, was weak. I, couldn't, protect, anything.

I, was still pathetic.

A day passed, and at the hospital, in front of the girl who had lost her consciousness, I cried. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I couldn't protect you. Despite knowing the fact that I had no rights to cry, tears kept flowing out. Sorry..... I'm sorry. If it weren't for me, then you wouldn't have had to go through this mess. What am I? I'm just baggage. Because of trash like me. I could have tormented myself like that until the end of the world, but Minhee wouldn't return even if I were to do that. She won't return.

The only things that remained

was the regret that had nowhere to go

and the prayer beads that were gifted to me.

'Calm down.' It felt as if I were hearing words. 'Calm down, me.' It was telling me to suppress something trivial like a whirlpool of emotions. Those thoughts became stronger the more strength I put into my grip on the beads. 'Is this the best I can do?' Press. 'Is crying, weeping, and tormenting yourself a path you're taking for her?' It was whispering to me that there was a different way. 'Stand up.' I stood, 'Isn't your head, really good?'

Aah, that's right! I may have escaped from reality in order to atone for my irreparable sin and in order to not go mad! No, I might have already gone insane at that moment, in that instant! But that didn't matter..... I had a goal..... I had to fix all of the things that were wrong..... I truly believed that.

It was at that moment, that I became resolute to truly fight back. And thus, I entered the latter half of the '8 Years' War'.



The fourth day, I summarized everything that happened until now.

First, I was kidnapped by a lunatic from another world.

Second, I've been avoiding the frequently visiting life-threatening situations through composure and text analysis.

Third, I still can't see any hope of survival.

And finally,

“Your Excellency!!”

“Giiiiive it heeeere, Gia, Batsaaaand!! Are you insane!?”

“Your Excellency, I plead you to calm down! Regain your dignity!”

“Dignity? Diiignity!? Ah, just give it to meee, Gia. Quuiickly. Right now!”

“I won't let go until you calm down! Even if you blame me, it can't be helped!”

It's sudden, but I'm currently in a life-threatening situation.

In the torture chamber, I currently have my head sticking through a guillotine and waiting for the blade to fall. The rope that's attached to the blade was in the Earl's hand for a moment, but it was just now taken by Gia. Gia spoke.

“Your Excellency. I beg of you, please explain what happened in a calm and orderly fashion. Isn't it okay for him to at least receive that opportunity?”

“Opportunity? Ah hah ha. That's funny. Gia Batsand. He's an otherworldly being anyway, you know? It doesn't matter when and why he dies, right? Now lower that rope. This is the Earl's order!”

“I can't accept, that kind of order!”

“I'm not telling you to accept it. I'm telling you to do it!!”

The Earl then shoved her hand in her coat pocket and pulled out a necklace. Following after, without giving Gia the opportunity to even flinch, the earl summoned her. Poof……! Gia appeared right in front of the earl. Naturally, the rope that Gia was holding moved along with her. I wonder if it was because she was still within the range of the rope length, but there was no occasion of the entire guillotine moving as well. The rope was being kept taut.

Thud! The earl kicked Gia who was in that state. Gia lost her posture, and the instant that happened, the earl canceled the summon and Gia ended up letting go of the rope. Ah, that's a bit troubling. The reason why it's troubling is because that's the rope to the guillotine I'm in…… the sound of a blade descending…….

“Kuroso—Extro……!!”

Flash……!! Both the descending blade and the guillotine were split just like that. Crash……!! When I looked up, I could see Gia collapsed in the posture which she swung her blade in. I wonder if her body had stiffened since she was breathing heavily while not moving a single muscle, meanwhile, a white light was wrapped around the sword she was holding. After a short while, the light dispersed. The earl gritted her teeth.

“Gia. You're…… prepared for your consequences, riiight…?”

Gia Batsand clicked her tongue.

“If I must, then yes, I'm prepared, but Earl, you should first.”

“Give me a reason, please.”

This was something I said. Although I've escaped the dangers of death, I'm still bound to the hole on the guillotine. My neck hurts because of the impact of the guillotine breaking.

“Reeaason? Ha. Is something like that needed? You're a torture pet which I summoned because I wanted to kill you. I'm saying that I want to kill the you who's in that situation. That's iiiiiittt.”

She was right so I couldn't give a rebuttal. However, if I don't say anything, then I'll die, so let's use my head.

‘But you can at least give me the reason, can’t you?’ No, she’ll only get angrier. ‘Heey. It’s not good for your health if you run amok.’ This will get the same result. It’s also nothing more than being coy. ‘There’s a reason why I shouldn’t die.’ I didn’t ask yooouuu! I’ll probably be shut down after receiving that sort of reply, won’t I?

Ah, for me to be in a situation where I’ll instantly be killed if I make the wrong choice, even trashy games have their limits. Regardless, I’m currently taking part in that trashy game. Although I’m only interpreting this through the atmosphere, but there’s a time limit to this as well.

I spoke.

“Eaaaaaaaaaarl……!!”

The fact that I’ve never raised my voice even once until now was all for a situation like this. A strategical use. The Earl of the Silver Lion, and even Gia who was looking at the earl, flinched.

Silence.

“W-What is it…….”

The Earl spoke after laboriously revealing her teeth. However, that was after she was already pressed back by my vigor and Gia had walked to my side.

“Tell me, Earl.”

“……, ……., ……………, ……., ………-.”

“Killing me, you can do that afterward, can’t you? I want to hear the reason. What is it?”

The Earl of the Silver Lion-the girl who was pulling back her shoulders, let out a sigh.

“I-It’s because of that.”, she spoke while avoiding my eyes. “That, the thing you told me to do.”

“What thing? The maid trial?”

“Before that! That, threatening the Fedchants thing…… I’m talking about that.”

“What about it? Did a problem occur?”

Although it seemed like the Earl was about to get angry again, soon after, she let out another long sigh. She then sat down and started giving me the details.

If I were to organize her rambling talk that was filled to the brim with exclamation marks and all sorts of symbols :

“So, you mean to tell me that they found out you forged those documents?”

“That’s right! A-And, that idea. You’re the one who gave it to me. Since it’s become troubling now that it’s revealed, I’m telling you to take responsibility by dying.”

Gia stood up.

“Your Excellency!<sup>[2]</sup> No matter how you look at it, that’s not right. In the first place, the suggestion Yujin gave was merely an opinion. The one who executed that plan was Your Excellency the Earl. The responsibility is in Your Excellency’s hands. A complaint like that is dismissed!”

“This isn’t the time to make bad joookes!!”

“Ehem, I apologize for that. I thought it was a good timing, however, the fact still stands. You’re already aware of this, aren’t you, Your Excellency?”

“I don’t know! Why would I, uu, know something like that? Something like that…… aah. Aaaaaanyway, the talk is over now, right? Now then, Gia, with that blade, that otherworldly creature-.”

“How’d it get found out?”

“That otherworldly creature-.”

“There’s no reason it’d be caught. So how? You said that it went well just yesterday. What was turned over and where did it happen? Earl, tell me.”

The Earl's lips turned white. She was biting onto them that much.

I waited.

The Earl-The Earl of the Silver Lion, spoke.

“First, I don't have the ability to make convincing forged documents.”

“Mm.”

“Second, despite that, I didn't want to make one of my retainers do it, either. The reason why is because.”

“You didn't trust them. You most likely believed that the information will be passed right on to the Fedchants the moment you made someone else forge the documents. That's why you didn't order your retainers. What happened next?”

“....., .....there's a place called, the Black Dragon Street. It's one of the twelve factions and a group that has one of the Twelve Sky Barriers supporting them as a column. It's a place where almost every single thief, illegal activity, traps, counterfeits, pimps, and prostitutes are a part of. I called a professional from there and made them forge the documents.”

“But that professional came in contact with the Fedchants?”

“No. The written request and receipt I submitted to the Black Dragon Street was passed over to them.”

I furrowed my brow. What is she saying?

“Wait. Then are you saying that the Black Dragon Street group or whatever is in cahoots with the Fedchants?”

“That's probably not it. Obviously, I questioned the people at the Black Dragon Street. If they were messing with me. If they intended to make the Earl of the Silver Lion into their enemy. The moment I did so, they told me this. A senior executive betrayed them and ran away. And of all things, they took a bunch of papers before running off. Among the documents the person took, the papers related to the Earl of the Silver Lion were one of them. That's what they said.”

“Then you can make the Black Dragon Street take responsibility.”

“Of course! However, making them take responsibility and something that has already occurred, are two separate matters. The Fedchants are showing their nerves right noooow. Asking what I’m going to do for having put them in a trap. Of course, it’s true that I did put them in one. In any case, they’re going rampant.”

“What’s their request?”

“Normal procedure of the transaction. Enforce the demolition. A polite apology. To later accommodate the Fedchants.”

“They’re coming out strong, huh.”

“Since it’s true that they’re an organization of that scale. It’s also true, that they showed that much of a weakness as well.”

“You’re in a predicament…… Hm. For now, get me out of this. Let’s think about this together.”

The Earl clenched her fist. Gia moved quickly and released me from the restraints. Though the Earl was moving her lips as if she was going to say something, in the end, the Earl wasn’t able to utter a single word. I spoke while feeling the mark that was left on my neck.

“For now, three methods to deal with this situation come to mind.”

“Three?”

“Mm. One method is cutting off your tail. Make a scapegoat and shift the blame to them. They did things on their own and you know nothing about it.”

“That’s a tempting idea.”

“Stop being tempted. What do you plan to do by making more enemies? You’re a lord who doesn’t even have popularity.”

“Yesterday, I was a lord who received applause!”



“The moment you make a scapegoat, that applause will…….”

“Yeah yeah yeah. It’ll turn into saliva and be spat at me, I get it. I understand that much, okay?”

“You just wanted to say it?”

“I just wanted to say it.”

“Those words must have been quite blinded.”[\[3\]](#)

Both the Earl and I, stared at Gia. We then turned back to each other.

“And the second?”

“Denial. You never hired anyone from that kind of organization and the receipt and written request they’re waving around are both fake.”

“Haaa? If something like that was possible…….”

“Then you would have done it already. That’s right. So why didn’t you?”

“Because the payment was made with a check signed under the House of the Earl’s name.”

“Are you an idiot……!?”

This was a legitimate rebuttal. However, the Earl didn’t lose there.

“Ah damn it, do you think I did it!? Do you think I’m foolish enough to personally go in and out of the den of some thiiiiieeves!? Of course! It’s obvious that I made my right-hand person go and do iiiiiiiittt!!”

Both the Earl and I, stared at Gia.

Gia meekly got down onto her knees and bowed her head.

“I’m sorry.”

Wait, Gia, did you put forth that argument of ‘the one who executed the plan was Your Excellency so the fault also lies in Your Excellency’ earlier,

despite having done that.....?

“Uhm, Your Excellency, what about asking the Mage Tower to mediate the situation?”

“Mage Tower!? Maaaaage Tower!? For the person, who knows best about what those damned bastards did to me, to say that kind of nonseeeeeense.....!?”

“They say that knowing when to lower one’s head will result in big returns. If the Mage Tower mediates, then certainly.”

“Ah hah ha ha ha..... GiaGiaGia, Gia. Stop talking nonsense. A scapegoat. The scapegoat plan is really tempting, you know, Gia? Now then, it’s something that Mr. Yujin, the one you saved, suggested. Cutting the tail off of a lizard. Making a scapegoat. And whoooo will become that scapegoat, Giaaaaaaa?”

“Your Excellency..... We spent so much time together, just like siblings......”

“Siblings!? Siiiiiblings!? I recall having a trashy sibling and a psychotic sibling, but I don’t remember having a stupid sibling!!”

“That’s correct. I’m a smart sibling, after all.”

“A good dodge.....!?”

“Adding to that, I’m also beautiful and strong.”

“You’re saying that while puffing out your chest.....!?”

“For example, the skill that I used in order to slice the guillotine earlier, it’s one of the Twelve World Skills that’s also known as the Great Rending Slice. A transcending skill that ignores the density of the target and slices through it!”

“It sounds cool.....!?”

I decided to squeeze in around there. I was already well aware of the fact that these two were a pair of master and servant, who were on the same

wavelength, long before witnessing this scene.

“What do you mean by requesting for the Mage Tower to mediate?”

“Ugh. You’ll be better off not thinking about it.  
ImpossibleImpossibleImpossibleImpossible.”

“Tell me. I need to keep in mind the selectable methods.”

The Earl glared at me as if she loathed me, no, it’s probably fine to remove the ‘as if’. In any case, she replied.

“It’s exactly as it says. If I request for arbitration, then the Mage Tower will mediate the situation between myself and the Fedchants. Since I’m unilaterally at a disadvantage, they’ll probably make me incline some things to the Fedchants. Like ending it after agreeing to the land contracts.”

“And in return, you’ll be in debt to the Mage Tower?”

“Yeess. I have a rough guess at what they’ll ask for, but in any case, I don’t want to. Something like that sort of choice.”

There was a constant look of worry on Gia’s face.

“But, Your Excellency. You’re not going to lower your head to the Fedchants either, right?”

“Even if someone does incline, I’ll be the one doing it. Gia, it’s not something you need to be worried about.”

“Your Excellency…….”

“Though it may be because of some retard that this happened, I’ll be the one to loower it, my head that is.”

“Just now, I gained a sudden desire to vehemently lick the back part of Your Excellency’s knee…….”

“Gia, do you know that you occasionally throw openings that are hard for even me to tsukkomi?”

Dang it. Even this fellow uses the word tsukkomi instead of rebuttal or tackle…….

Well, one person taught them, after all…….

“Can you not do anything about that check?”

“Yeess. That’s already out. If I want to change it, then I’d have to move these and those things around, but I don’t have that kind of authority.”

“Okay. Then the third method. Acted out of your goodwill.”

“Goodwill?”

“Acknowledge it, and then reveal your reasoning behind it as well. That you intervened because they tried to take the land of your citizens against their will.”

The Earl knitted her brow. She had the typical look of a person, who had no idea what was being said, on her face.

I elaborated for her.

“You said you’re going to make the Black Dragon Street shoulder the responsibility, right?”

I elaborated a bit more since she still seemed clueless.

“You said the documents, which the Fedchants possessed, were stamped by stealing the seals, right?”

“Yeah, yes. Though it’s, just my assumption.”

“There’s something convenient about this world. Merchants with other merchants make the Fedchants. Pharmacists with other pharmacists make the Alchemy Fortress. Thieves with other thieves make the Black Dragon Street. It’s this fact that they’re all bunched together that makes things convenient. Then, the act of stealing the seals and stamping it on the contracts, who could have done it? The Fedchants most likely didn’t do it themselves. They probably made a request somewhere.”

"....., ....., ..... , ..... , ..... , ....."

“Sure, the people over at the Fedchants most likely didn’t leave behind a trace when they made their transaction. Regardless, a written request and a receipt will still exist. A bundle of commissions requesting for them to steal the seals of the related documents and stamp them. If they have that, though there’s no evidence, it’s rather obvious.”

“B-But, Mr. Yujin. Not having evidence, is a big deal, you know, Mr. Yujin?”

“That’s why you don’t go in too much. You cancel the compensation and also open up a path for the Fedchants so they can claim that they’re victims as well. In return, you crush whatever pathetic request they had. Isn’t that enough?”

The Earl of the Silver Lion was looking at me with her mouth slightly agape again.

I didn't say anything more. Organizing the information in order to reach the conclusion was a bit more complicated this time, and..... Ah, the rough outline is out now, isn't it? Figure out the rest by yourself. Regardless of whether she heard my inner thoughts or not, the Earl of the Silver Lion cried out fitfully.

“.....B-B-But. Hguu, b-b-buuut. W-What if there aren’t aaany? Those written requests. What if they say there are none leeeft? Adding to that, in the first place..... the chances that the Fedchants didn’t make a request towards the Black Dragon Street, though I also think it’s 90%, no 99% that they did.....”

“That’s why it’s essential to call to account the Black Dragon Street. If there are none, then tell them to make some. They’re the one’s who made an idiotic mistake, anyway. You have some trust in that field of business as well, right? You—for this time only, can borrow the strength of the Black Dragon Street for as much as you want.”

“Uh, mmm.....”

“Let’s summarize. Receive the evidence of the Fedchant’s illegal request

from the Black Dragon Street. If they say that there's no evidence remaining, then make the Black Dragon Street create some. During that time, you don't have to make the smoke go excessively towards the Fedchants. Put only doubt in the public. It's sufficient if you just arrange the statement, 'I acted because of this', as your basis at first. End."

The Earl dropped her shoulders. She looked like a drained panther, that was lying outside in the middle of a summer day, because of the way she was showing her canines while biting her tongue.

"And so."

I spoke.

"What's the 'real' reason you wanted to kill me?"

The Earl let out an 'ack' sound.

Gia froze.

Silence.

"W-What are you talking about? I told you earlier. Because the suggestion you made was a failure. And then I got annoyed. Solely for that reason, I tried to kill you, because you're an otherworldly being, you have no rights, and I'm, that sort of person-so-."

"That's an excuse. I'm not talking about that kind of ostensible reason." I stared straight at her. "I'm asking you for your true reason."

"Uu..... Something like a true reason....."

"There is one."

This wasn't a jump to conclusion.

In truth, when you read the collection of text that is this girl, I was able to get a sense of it when Gia elaborated on the Earl's past yesterday.

The Earl of the Silver Lion bit her lips just like that..... Silence.

“Uuh…… uuuh…….”

It wasn't for long.

“Uh, uuuh…… Aaaaaaaaaaaah……!!”

The Earl, didn't cry. She merely glared at me while gritting her teeth as strong as she could.

“Damn it…… Damn it……!! You! You, didn't you……!!”

You.

“make, me, weird……!?”

Stillness.

“I'm not wounded by anything, and I, don't feel pain from anything. Something complicated, whatever it is, as if I'd feel it. Because I'm, already, uu, uuuuughuuuuuh.”

Since you're already- broken.

Because you believed that.

“I'm a heartless monster. It was good enough if I was just that. I'd kill otherworldly creatures as if it were nothing and I'd think nothing of the people. Since I'm just the earl. That's right. Since I'm the earl, I take care of something like my subjects. If I receive stress then I summon otherworldly beings and torment them-kill them. I stomp, and stomp, and stomp, and stomp on them. In the end, when not even a single fragment of their minds remains, I pull out their bone marrow and play with that as well. I worked adequately, enough work to not get kicked out. That's it. Live like that, and die like that. If I think my death is unfair, then I'll make the entire world my traveling companion and die together, that was my life. My existence. It was like that, but.”

It was supposed, to be like that.

“I didn't hope for anything more, and I believed that I couldn't go back, and yet…….”

If you lived like that- then you can no longer,  
any more than that, truly  
nothing.

Even though you could have been able to lose nothing.

“You, to, me.”

The Earl of the Silver Lion, grabbed her head. The white rings and bracelets that were said to be attached to her bones, the manifestations of her resolution that will never be taken off ever again- were buried, into her hair.

“Giving me a headache…… you keep…… talking to me…… confusing me…… because, you do that……!!”

“You wanted to break me.”

“That’s, riiiiight……! Without leaving…… a single trace…… no, without even torture…… just, just quickly, as fast as possible.”

“That’s why the guillotine, huh? You’re easy to read.”

“Uuh…… aauuuuuu…….”

I’ll say it once more, the Earl didn’t cry. The edge of her eyes wasn’t even red. She merely glared at me, while grasping her head. Those silver pupils that had a sharp glare, were indeed like a vicious carnivore, a ‘Silver Lion’.

However, those eyes, I was simply happy about them.

I welcomed them.

And on the contrary, it felt like I was going to cry instead.

“Thanks.”

The Earl froze. I spoke to her. I calmly told her the truth that could possibly become a curse.



“You’ve finally, looked at me.”

The product of my hard work.

“The me who’s in front of you.”

The result was only this.

“The me who’s alive.”

Finally, to you- I’m, no longer an otherworldly being that you can’t feel empathy towards.

“As a human being.”

I’ve imprinted on her the fact that I’m another living ‘human being’ that can draw empathy.



And the conclusion of the fourth day.

The Earl of the Silver Lion was glaring at me wordlessly for a long time. And then,

Thud……!

I didn’t shout. Honestly, how much could it hurt if she kicked me in the knee with that tiny foot of hers? Thud! Thud! No, I mean, since I’m being kicked it still does hurt, but…… Thud! It sort of does hurt a lot, but…… Thud! Thud! Uh, no.

However, before I could put the brakes on her actions, the Earl stopped on her own. She then stuck out her tongue and turned around fast enough to make an audible woosh-.

“Hmph! How pathetic.” She pulled on her coat and straightened it. “I’m going to sleep!”

She then dragged Gia along with her. Instead of canceling her summon, she left by properly opening the iron bars leading to the stairs with her key.

“Y-Your Excellency. Are you not going to lock it?”

“It’s fine! I have my ability, so something like bars, I don’t need them- Isn’t that right? I almost reached the limit of my summon, and I also feel too lazy to lock it!”

“Your Excellency-.”

I then watched the master and servant go upstairs without locking the bars at all with a bitter smile.

## Footnotes

1. [\[↑\]](#) Minhee talks with a very thick dialect.
2. [\[↑\]](#) **‘Your Excellency’** is written the same as **‘dismissed’**.
3. [\[↑\]](#) The line Yujin and the Earl said can also be read as **‘Words that just looked at the sun’**.



It seems like the time to talk about the end of the 8 Years' War has arrived.

Like I said before, it was a war of influence. A battle where we disrupted, controlled, deceived, and stole from the opponent's faction. A game of territory conquest that unfolded not on a Go board, but with the entire school as the background. It didn't matter whether our ally was an idiot or the opponent was an upright person. At the age of 15, there was an incident involving Shin Eunji that occurred. At the age of 16, I shattered the mid-boss of Chanmi's faction, Eun Minseon, and destabilized their group. And, at the age of 17- crossing over to high school, followed by another year, that blazing summer that felt like everything was going to melt when I was 18-years-old.

We finally reached the full stop once I was elected as school president and Joo Chanmi, who was pushed back in votes, miserably became the vice-president. The Joo Chanmi at the time, appeared as if she were empty.

[Yujin, ain't your head really good?]

If it's the story, then indeed, it would have ended here, but.

[This.....uh, for you to think of me whenever I'm not around.]

This time, I couldn't put down the period at the end of the sentence.

Forcefully continued the story. Disgraceful and cruel unnecessary comments. ....I, started the purge.

I started fiddling with the personages at the very bottom of Chanmi's faction. Bullying, slander, defamation, execution. Each time I crushed one person under my feet, I spoke to Chanmi. Joo Chanmi. Minhee, give back, Minhee. You used people and broke her. You broke her to the point where she's now beyond retrieval. That girl is now living while depending on a machine. You did this. Didn't you break her? Then you should be able to undo it. You should be able to fix it. That's right.

You can't be unable to do this.

However, even after Chanmi's clique was completely shattered, and only

Chanmi remained, the occurrence where Minhee opened her eyes never occurred.

I couldn't accept it.

Why?

Why, is it?

Why won't, Minhee, wake up?

Minhee, Cha Minhee. My Goddess whose hair fluttered like flames. Why won't you open your eyes? Why won't you tell me? I overcame it. I overcame being bullied and treated like an outcast. If anything, I gathered my own faction and crushed the bastard who ruined you and stepped on me. This was possible because you were there. Because you transferred to our school on that day. Because you were there. I'm great, right? Isn't the current me admirable? My savior.

Minhee. Ah, Minhee.

But, why? Why, is it?

Ah.

Ah, ah.

Ah. Ah. Ah. Ah. Ah, aaah. Ah. Ah.

Is that it, Chanmi? Is it because you're alive? Is it because I didn't put my hands on you? I see. They say that you have to solve the problem that you yourself created. So as long as you're around, Minhee won't be able to return. If that's so, then I have no more reason to let you go. I'll give you special treatment.

I won't let you live.

I dragged her to Minhee's hospital room. This was a type of ritual. I declared it as so. In the hospital room that's covered in darkness, with the sound of Minhee sleeping as the background, beside her, Joo Chanmi, you, will die here. That is your fate. The sound of liquid dripping in Minhee's IV,

the noisy chirping of a starling that gave me a headache, a ringing sound in my ear. The white hands that were choking Chanmi's neck.

My, hands.

The reason I stopped,

was because of the one line Chanmi uttered, before passing out.

'I'm, sorry.'

My hands trembled. I stared into her eyes because I couldn't believe it. It would be a different case if someone else were to say it, but I couldn't trust it when this person was the one. However, that really was Joo Chanmi. Chanmi spoke using Chanmi's voice.

'So,rry. I'm, so,rry. Yu,jin, I'm, so,rry.'

Sorry, Yujin.

Sorry.

I shouted.

Don't beg for forgiveness. I didn't want to hear those words from you. 'So,rry.' Shut up. Only you aren't allowed to say those words. You absolutely cannot. 'Sorry..... I'm sorry, Yujin.' Shut up. Fucking, shut up. 'Sorry..... I'm sorry, Yujin. Sorry. It was my fault. It was my, yeah, my fault..... Yujin.....' Shut uuuuup! Chanmi didn't listen. That prodigy girl, with her neck released, cried. She was weeping, like a child, collapsed next to Minhee, who was laying down like a vegetable. I was also crying. My tears, felt like they were magma piercing through the face of the earth. The unrecoverable generosity that flowed down the paved path.

It was then, that I realized.

There's a limit, to everything. There are things you can't get back, in the world.

Even the prodigy girl of a conglomerate, and even myself who had broken that girl, there are things that are impossible even for us in this world.

Therefore,

Therefore,

Therefore, in the first place

In order for it to not break

In order to not lose it

I should have, worked harder.

Everyone was young at the time..... thus no one knew.



The fifth day, I organized the occurrences that happened so far.

First, I was kidnapped by a lunatic from another world.

Second, I ended up in a situation where I was supporting that lunatic politically • intellectually.

Third, among those affairs, the first trouble was something that involved a group called the Fedchants, so I advised her to resolve it by using the Black Dragon Street, but.....

“Did it not turn out well?”

“Mm? Mr. Yujin, why do you think that’s so, Mr. Yujin?”

“Well, that’s because you abruptly knocked me down onto the ground, and now you’re stepping on my face.”

“I’m washing your face! I’m making Mr. Yujin’s face clean!”



“What world’s method is that?”

“It goes without saying, it’s an old tradition that’s been passed down in the world of heavens.”

“Why is it the heaven that I ridiculously dislike……?”

“As for proof, look. If I do the same thing to this angel, then…”

Additionally, although it seems as if, after great mid-progress, Miss Earl of the Silver Lion has acknowledged that I was a ‘human’, it didn’t apply to the other beings.

Sorry, other beings. I’m busy trying to live.

“Putting that aside, what happened? Tell me already.”

“Ehem. Gia? Explain.”

Gia let out a sigh and scratched her blue hair.

“It didn’t turn out well.”

“And I didn’t say out loud that if you told me it didn’t turn out well when I asked the first time, then we could have saved a lot of time.”

“Gia let out a groan and had an angry expression on her face. However, she soon responded like this.”

I was natural! instead of saying this, I slowly made my way into the main topic…… Ah, that was dangerous. I almost said this out loud as well. This isn’t even my style and yet it feels as if I’m going to go along with her pace. This happens whenever I have to deal with her.

Anyway, the main point.

“So how? I don’t think it was a situation where it wouldn’t work.”

Gia turned to glance at the Earl. However, since the Earl was still stepping on my face while not showing any sign of interest, Gia continued.

“There’s another reason why that didn’t work.”

“What is it?”

“This time, it’s the Black Dragon Street’s fault for the written request and receipt being passed over to the Fedchants. The Black Dragon Street admitted this completely, however, they voiced their concerns that if they passed the Fedchant’s receipt to us as well, or if they forged them for us, then that will just upsize the problem. ‘Our other customers will be anxious if receipts and written requests are being passed around recklessly.’, is what they said. ‘Furthermore, since it’s our fault, we will take responsibility, but even if we do so, if we do something that’s disadvantageous for the Fedchants, then wouldn’t they also request for us to take the same responsibility?’ they said that as well.”

“Though I get what they’re saying, that’s ridiculous. In the first place, didn’t the executive run away with the documents because they received money from the Fedchants?”

“It’s not certain.”

“Is it not certain, or is it because there’s no evidence.”

“The latter. Though I believe, that it’s most likely the Fedchant’s deed.”

“Hm. In conclusion, if I narrow it down, then the Black Dragon Street doesn’t want to start any trouble with the Fedchants.”

“Since the Fedchant is a huge organization, after all.”

“I see.”

“Do you have another idea?”

I stared straight at Gia.

“Not yet. I need a little more time to think.”

Gia had a clear disappointed look on her face.

“Is that so.” She then soon recovered. “Your Excellency, how about doing

what I suggested yesterday?”

Meanwhile, the Earl had finally taken her foot off of my face, and had stepped up onto my chest and was tapping her feet.

.....Spare me. I'm a human being, you know?

“Hm? What you said yesterday, Gia?”

“Requesting for the Mage Tower to mediate.”

“.....I told you, I don't, waaaaant to.”

Gia had a bothered look on her face.

“Your Excellency, I'm more than aware that you feel pain. It must hurt to make a request to those people. However, there are times in your life when something will come to bite you in the back when you fail to do something when it's required.”

“I don't think right now is that time, though?”

“It's now. You can't incline to the Fedchants, right? If you end up getting entangled rashly, then there's a chance that the entire Earl's House will get pulled in as well. Your Excellency should already be aware of that danger.”

Gia hesitantly stroked her own stomach and gave a sidelong scowl. The Earl was silent for a moment before speaking.

“And in contrast, what will happen if I request for the Mage Tower to mediate?”

“Summon the thing the Mage Tower wants and send it to them, that's it. isn't it? You don't have to lower your head to the Fedchants, and you can prevent your citizens from going through pain......”

“Ooh? Would the Mage Tower help out that much?”

“I'll talk with them properly.”

“Hmph. For someone like you, you're rather confident.”

“Damn it…… Your Excellency!”

I, who had his hands in his pocket and was fumbling with his smartphone, and even the Earl, froze and stared at Gia. In that spot, there wasn't a woman who indulged in BL or a fool who enthusiastically made bad jokes, but a female knight who was lowering her head in embarrassment.

“I messed things up.”

A silence flowed.

“Yes. I'm the one who ruined everything. If I only hadn't used the check signed under the Earl's House. Even if the request and receipt were passed onto the Fedchants, it should have been meaningless. I understand. It was my mistake. That's why, I.”

“Gia.”

“Won't let Your Excellency lower your head to someone like the Fedchants…….”

Gia didn't finish her sentence. The Earl was gazing at her knight who was lowering her head.

There was another silence.

Thud! She then suddenly kicked my chin.

What, are you doing? when I looked up at her with those words written on my face, she stepped on my nose. ……No, it hurts. Seriously.

“What are you doing?”

I was kicked again without receiving an answer. Since it really hurt, I grabbed her ankle.

“It hurts.”

“You're grabbing meeee? Graaaaabbing? Hm, what hurts? You should just obediently get hit. You dirty otherworldly being.”

“I’ll get hit after I know the reason.”

“No, well, I felt annoyed.”

An incredibly sullen face said those words. For some reason, it truly felt like the expression of a normal 16-year-old girl. A girl who was getting mad at the world because things weren’t going right.

“Do you normally kick people when that happens?”

“It’s a massage, so you’ll be able to use your head more.”

“I’ll be able to do that quite well, when I’m being treated like this.”

If it were just yesterday, then she would have already snapped and moved me to the torture rack by now, but the current Earl just gave me a sharp glare instead.

And then.

“You, should I send you home?”

She spoke the words which I never expected to hear.

It seems Gia was surprised by her words as well. Her mouth was agape. I was shocked. However, while ignoring all of our responses, the Earl, without meeting any of our eyes, spat out.

“Think of a good method. A method where I won’t have to incline to either the Mage Tower or the Fedchants. It’s fine for you to think about it.”

At this point, I didn’t question her about what she meant by ‘think about it’, and ‘send you home’, to be exact, I didn’t have the time to do so. Before I could say anything else, the Earl was already dusting her coat and arranging her clothes.

“.....Hmph.”

And then, the Earl puffed up her cheeks and marched up the stairs. She had basically tossed aside both Gia and I so we could only watch as the Earl’s figure disappeared.



A stillness continued to flow. A female knight who was biting her lips in guilt, and myself, who was used as a floor mat and covered in dust.

In the end, I was the first person to speak.

“Gia.”

Gia didn't respond. I let out a sigh.

“Gia, are you alright?”

No answer.

“Young Master Sion is really cute. I like him, too.”

“You think so, as well!?”

“Yeah, and you?”

“Mm, I like the savage butler. However, he can only display his worth when there's another person. No matter how much technique one has, a catcher is needed for a pitcher to shine, and…….”

I stayed silent while I watched the hopeless BL-stained blue haired female knight(18) who was born in another world, raised in another world, and properly serving her lord. Gia Batsand must have realized what she was doing as she had let out an ‘ah’.

“Of course, I also like the situations where a pitcher is struggling on their own when a catcher isn't around. Something like this, a long time after a pitcher and a catcher gets into a relationship. The catcher has to leave the pitcher's side for a while because of a school trip or something. So every day, the pitcher, who's left by himself, on the bed, with his loneliness…….”

There was an otherworldly blue haired female knight(18), who became even more ecstatic after becoming self-aware of her situation, standing here.

.....Let's stop, please.

"Gia."

Gia closed her mouth. A bitter smile spread across her lips.

"It was a joke."

"It doesn't seem like a joke when you're talking about BL....."

"I know that feeling."

"So you're aware?"

"Of course. Regardless, it can't be helped. I was made to like BL. This is most likely a problem in my genes."

"Haa."

"Perhaps that's why, when you analyze a selfish gene, you get the 'ah' feeling that there's a pitcher gene and a catcher gene. If you look at it like that, then whether you're a catcher or a pitcher is determined before you're born, so it's a genetical issue. Natural Born Attack. Natural Born..... uh..... mm."

"Why did you betray the Earl?"

Silence.

"Ah, right. It was Natural Born Defense.

"It's not that defense. Why did you betray the Earl?"

"Natural Born Number<sup>[1]</sup>."

"It's not that defense either. I asked you why you betrayed the Earl."

Gia looked down at me with her head slightly turned. I met that gaze silently while holding my prayer beads.

Silence.

Gia, spoke. While once again, turning her head, until it creaked.

“What, do you mean?”

“I mean just that. Why, did you, betray, the Earl, Gia, Batsand? I’m asking you that. Should I say it again?”

Gia didn’t want that. She clenched her fist.

“Why do you say that? Even if it’s you, Yujin, I can’t let that slide.”

“If I explain it to you calmly, then will you tell me?”

“Go ahead.”

If that’s the case. I nodded my head.

“The first time I thought it was strange, was when I found out that you were the one who gave the check that was signed by the House of the Earl’s name to the Black Dragon Street.”

“That’s because, I’m an idiot.”

“There’s a limit to stupidity. And an idiot can’t become a knight. Every time you open your mouth you’re thinking about the Earl. For the knight, who’s always thinking of the Earl and was accusing herself that much earlier, to go into the cave of thieves and make a transaction with a check from the Earl’s House? No matter how much of an idiot you are, I don’t believe that could ever happen.”

“Anyone can make a mistake.”

“Let’s say that’s the case, then what about after that? Today as well, you’re the one who went to make a trade with the Black Dragon Street, right? Even while possessing a good proposition, you didn’t push it, but instead, returned after having lost. It’s obvious. Because you didn’t have the intention to win.”

“That’s out of my hands. I’m a knight, and there are times when I don’t win arguments, and there are also times when I’m unable to make proper negotiations.”



“Hmm, a conditional problem?”

“Adding to that, the Black Dragon Street didn’t want to start friction with the Fedchants, and because of that they were especially belligerent with me…….”

“You probably wanted it to appear like that.”

Silence.

“What, are, you saying?”

“Gia. Look at the image as a whole.” I let out a sigh and stretched my body. “Honestly, it isn’t only one or two things that were strange.”

“I’m telling you that isn’t the case.”

“That’s right, it was strange when I heard that the Fedchants were obtaining land with that sort of method. At first, I thought they were treating your Earl like an idiot. However, regardless of whether they treated her like a fool or not, the earl is still the earl, and she’s also one of the twelve existing Sky Barriers in your world. There’s no need to pick a fight when you’re trying to obtain the land of a person like that.”

“That’s what you think, but since the Fedchant’s judgment is different…….”

“Listen. What I mean by ‘no need to pick a fight’, is that ‘there’s no need to take over the land of 10 people by stealing and stamping their seals, a method that’s strange no matter who looks at it.’”

“Tell me in easy terms.”

“It’s like this. The Fedchant, is literally a place where almost every single merchant is a part of, right? Your current Pharmaceutical Association, or rather, the Alchemy Fortress, has a vaccine for almost every single disease in your world because they share information among one another. Then wouldn’t it be the same for the Fedchants, as well? The place where almost every single merchant in your world is a part of, how many incredible knowhows do they have accumulated? Even I can’t fathom it. If they used only a couple of their knowhows, then honestly, they can easily obtain

something like land. However, why did those ‘Fedchants’ do something weird like that? That’s problem number 1.”

Gia was now glaring at me in silence.

With her blue eyes.

This girl, I’ve felt this since the first time I was summoned here by the Earl, but she possesses, an incredibly befitting, tremendously- frigid, and cold face.

“Now then, Gia? The Fedchants behaved like that towards the Earl as if they wanted to start a fight. A method that’s so obvious that anyone who glanced at it would realize what they’re up to, and they fostered that while obstinately causing discord. Just like a fraud ring trying to receive compensation money for something minor, to the Earl, it was as if they were asking her to hit them once. If the Earl was fooled by that, then that’s that. It may have also been over if she didn’t get fooled by it, either. In any case, the Earl, who was going through a lot of stress, was fooled by it. ....Though for this part, I was one of the major reasons for that stress.”

If I didn’t needlessly give her tips, then the incident wouldn’t have become as large as this. Although I’m upset at the earl, I was planning to accept that it couldn’t be helped. If I thought like that, then ‘Didn’t I fail because of your unnecessary piece of advice?’ that fellow came and complained to me. In the end, she was right.

“Therefore, second. The Earl screwed with the Fedchants just like that. But a day after that, no, not even two days, a betrayal occurred unexpectedly within the Black Dragon Street? And out of all things, they passed over the Earl’s written request and recipe to the Fedchants? This can’t be explained by coincidence, right?”

“That’s why, probably.”

Gia opened her mouth. Gia, aah, Gia.

You aren’t supposed to open your mouth right now. I’m not denouncing you, but I’m talking about the weirdness of the situation. But why are you protecting that situation? That itself is a mistake. I didn’t explain to her

that right now was the timing to keep her mouth shut..... without a word, I just listened to what Gia had to say.

“The Fedchants- probably bribed, the executive from the Black Dragon Street. Since they were humiliated by our earl, in order to get her back- they, utilized that immense funding of theirs, and used the executive from the Black Dragon Street.”

“And made him betray them?”

“That’s it.”

“Wrong.”

Gia looked at me as if questioning how someone who’s never been outside could be so sure of himself. If you look at it in reverse, then that meant I’d be able to affirm it if I were outside.

“Time is the problem.”

I said that and continued.

“The Black Dragon Street, you see, is still quite the big organization, right? No matter how much money you offer, would someone like an executive betray their group in a moment’s notice? Before even a day or two could pass, at that? Furthermore, in that case, wouldn’t that mean the Black Dragon Street was screwed over by the Fedchants? Then wouldn’t the Black Dragon Street want to deal a blow to the Fedchants? But when you went to them, you said that the Black Dragon Street would deal a blow to the Fedchants, so they didn’t want to do what the Earl asked.”

“I’ve told you this several times now, but the Black Dragon Street doesn’t want friction with the Fedchants.....”

“There’s a better answer.”

“.....What is it?”

“The chance that both groups are plotting together. Though, it’s something I brought up yesterday, as well.”

Silence.

“If the two were plotting together with the sole purpose of screwing over the Earl, then the weird taunt from the Fedchants, the suspiciously quick betrayal of the Black Dragon Street executive, it would explain it all. Ah, in truth, another element needs to go in here as well.”

Silence.

“Now then. Next. Let’s say the two are indeed plotting together. Then who would benefit? The Black Dragon Street? The Fedchants? The Earl? No. Have you played mahjong before? Go-Stop? Either way, it’s a game with 4 players. If there are two players that are scheming together and one easy mark, then there’ll be one skillful player. A role that comfortably takes the money, and wipes their mouth without coming off as weird. A role where the player just has to be there. Tycoons usually take that role in a fraudulent gambling game. If that’s the case, then in this situation, where’s the magnate faction?”

Silence.

“Earlier, I said that another element needs to be added to the quick betrayal by the Black Dragon Street’s executive. Obviously. Be it the Black Dragon Street or the Fedchants, they’re both large organizations. But would things go so harmoniously in such a short amount of time? Using mahjong as an example again, no matter how much the two players planned to scheme together at first, the decoy, a fellow giving the signals to inform the others about what tiles the easy mark has, is required. That way they can decide whether they should pass the tile or receive a tile. You kang, pong, and ron, that’s how you do it. That’s right-one decoy, is essential. A person who sticks right next to the Earl and reports all of her movements, allowing the others to respond swiftly.”

If you think along those lines and go through the information again.

“Since yesterday, the person who kept insisting for the Mage Tower to mediate, despite the fact that their lord despised the idea.”

If I were to make a guess, then.

“At the very beginning, the idea of screwing over the Fedchants was something that came out from my head, the person who came from another world. It’s information that was shared between only three people. Me, you, and the Earl. Other people couldn’t have possibly been involved since the Earl asserted that she couldn’t believe something like other people. Then that means it’s just us three. First, it’s not the Earl.”

She has no reason to.

“It’s not me, either.”

I don’t have the method to.

“Then that means you’re the only one remaining. ....1 plus 1 is 2.”

And then-there was a silence.



Gia Batsand was expressionless. That face was eerily cold.

Although it felt like that void face would continue, she then let out a sigh and erased it. She shook her head as if she were lamenting.

“If I hear that much, then denying any more than this is impossible.”

“Would it be fine to take that as you agreeing with my words?”

“That’s right, Yujin. You, what are you exactly?”

“I told you before. A normal male student who overcame bullying.”

Gia Batsand smirked.

However, that really is all there is to me. I don’t have something like a special ability. The only thing I’m capable of is calmly looking at a situation and organizing it.

Although my inner words most likely didn’t transfer onto her, Gia let out

another sigh.

“Well, at least I feel relieved. If everything is revealed so refreshingly, then, if anything, my mind feels cooled off. I give you my thanks in that regard.”

“Though I’m thankful that you think like that, but why?”

To say it again : Why did you try to make the Earl become indebted towards the Mage Tower?

Gia shrugged her shoulders. I gripped my beads.

“Tell me. You even admitted to it a second ago, anyway. Then it’s only right for you to teach me.”

“An obligation, is it?”

“That’s right. I don’t understand. Didn’t you say it a few days ago? That the Earl was detained in the 7th branch office of the Mage Tower, and that they’re one of the major reasons as to why the Earl has become this broken? Of course, that 7th branch office of the Mage Tower has already been destroyed, but if it were a place that one of the Twelve Sky Barriers led at the time, then there’s no way that the upper echelon of the Mage Tower wouldn’t be aware of it. Even the repulsion that the Earl possesses towards the Mage Tower is because she doesn’t want to be in debt towards the people who detained her before.”

I gazed at Gia.

“But you, deliberately, tried to make your lord do that.”

“.....”

“What is it, Gia, Batsand? Were you only pretending to support the Earl at first?”

“Just because you’re talking away doesn’t mean you’re right, Yujin.”

“Then teach me the reason.”

Gia bit her lips. But not for a long time.

“It’s about Her Excellency the Earl’s ability, and the reason behind why Her Excellency was detained at the 7th branch office of the Mage Tower. It’s also the reason why the Mage Tower still has their interest leaning towards Her Excellency, but…….”

For now, like that, Gia Batsand started talking.

“Yujin. What do you think is the most outstanding part of the Earl’s ability?”

“The usage? For starters, I can narrow it down to 4 things.”

“Tell me them.”

“Tracker and rescuer. Say there’s a missing person. As long as she has that missing person’s belonging, then with the piece of life……catalyst……it feels like I’m talking about ‘DNA’ here, but, in any case, she can search that object and bring the missing person directly in front of her.”

“That’s one method.”

“Next, teleporter and carrier. By summoning a person who’s living in a certain city, she can stick to that person and cancel the summon, resulting in her teleporting along with them. Though it’s limited, it’s possible to use it as a teleportation ability. Furthermore, since clothing, and the things they’re carrying can be teleported as well, if used properly, then moving a lot of items over a long distance should be possible, right? In any case, it’s much faster than walking or riding on a boat. It also doesn’t cost any fuel.”

“That’s another method.”

“Third, a black hole that can suck in an indefinite amount of otherworldly beings……is another, but what should I say. Since the number of worlds that the Earl can meddle in is 12, and her ability is limited to a certain number of uses during a set cycle, I’ve deemed that as impossible.”

“So you knew?”

“The Earl herself was the one who told me about the number of worlds

she can meddle in being 12. The limited number of uses..... is because I can boast my observation skill and composure.”

“.....You, you keep saying that you’re a normal student. You’ve only been here for 5 days, you know?”

I smiled bitterly while putting more strength into my grip.

“Since earlier, it feels like you’ve been trying to make me into something that’s not a ‘normal student’.”

If I weren’t-a ‘normal student’ like that.

“If I really wasn’t, then I wouldn’t hope for anything more.”

If I had the strength Gia has, then I wouldn’t have been tormented like I was when I was young, and if I had a power like the Earl’s, then Minhee wouldn’t have had to end up like that.

However, that wasn’t the case. I lost things. I made mistakes. I regretted things. I became aware of my situation after I had already lost many, many precious things to me. Consequently, I eventually fell into despair by the fact that I couldn’t turn anything back, and could only scream as I was locked away in my inescapable inner asylum.

“For someone like me, what could I possibly be besides a normal student with a slightly good head?”

Gia didn’t reply.

I shook my head.

“Anyway, finally, the fourth usage. I believe that this is, probably, what you’re talking about.”

“Say it.”

“This very moment. The fact that we’re talking in Korean. The fact that you’re into BL. The fact that the Earl has an otaku-like hobby. -The fact that you can actually bring the knowledge and items from another world, at no cost, to this world, this is probably it.”



Gia Batsand laughed. She was looking at me with eyes as if she were looking at a monster.



“Gia, put those away. I don’t like, that type of gaze.”

She didn’t shift her gaze so I got upset.

“I’m just looking at a situation calmly. If there’s someone with the ability to ‘summon beings from another world’, then it’s natural to consider what that person can do and what other subsidiary things become possible. Also, I’m not some prophet or a pioneer. If there’s something that I can think about, then it’d be a situation where the research for it, all the way down to its core, has already been finished. That’s it. There’s nothing outside of that, there’s nothing above that, and there’s nothing below that.”

“You.”

“Anyway, I’m correct, right? The thing the Mage Tower is aiming for. The thing that the so-called Sky Prison fellow wanted while confining the Earl. The knowledge from other worlds…… That’s right. Since you said that the Korean language is at the level of a third-world country, then our world probably doesn’t have that high of a priority at the moment. Regardless, if I use our Earth as an example to understand it easier, if you summon some of the famous scientists in Korea right now, and extract useful techniques from them through torture, then. Yeah, it’s something that comes out often in SF films, ‘obtain new technology after torturing an alien.’-, it’s a stale cliché.”

How many failures did mankind have to go through in order to invent the concept known as the steam engine? How many people fell on their knees and disappeared in order to complete the very first computer? How many mathematicians, who collapsed without having left behind their name, were needed in order to reach Euler’s formula?

But, if you were able to obtain those easily?

Something like the language of another world, like how the Earl and Gia are able to do it right now, it's something that can be easily learned with time. I can imagine it. The sight of the people of this world learning Korean, English, Japanese, and German. The sight of the scientists, who were summoned by the Earl, being tied up in a row and being tortured. And then suddenly, due to that, steam engines and computers being added to this world. Pythagoras' theorem,  $E=MC^2$ , and the theory of relativity being added. Quantum mechanics, nuclear fusion, airplanes, rocket technology, rifles..... the things that were done by others, the achievements of other worlds- can be brought. They can simply take the fruits that originally required thousands of geniuses to achieve.

That's truly something so terrifying that it gives me goosebumps.

"Gia."

I bit my lips because of the imagery that flashed in my head, the sight that could make one shudder.

"You, did you want that?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"I don't know how the people from the Mage Tower convinced you. However, is that what you want? You're also interested in the technology of other worlds? The free technology that you can gain through torture and not diplomacy? Or what. Is there something else?" I shook my head and came to the conclusion. "Regardless of what it is, the truth is that you, the Earl of the Silver Lion's Sword, went over to their side."

At the same time as the momentary silence,

Gia showed a strange smile-as if something was splitting apart. It was truly a ghastly and dark smile.

"You're right."

She then started giving her explanation.

"It's actually been quite a long time since I was won over. It was a short while after Her Excellency had destroyed the 7th branch office of the Mage

Tower, so it's truly a long time ago. However, the upper executives of the Mage Tower who came in contact with me didn't have a radical view like the 7th branch office did, of course. They wanted a more moderate inducement. They told me that I didn't have to betray the Earl. All I had to do was, like right now, this very day, induce her very slightly. They said that was all I had to do."

The tinge of guilt which she showed earlier had reappeared on Gia's face while she was saying those words. ....If that's the case, then that means her earlier appearance wasn't an act, but truly, she couldn't raise her head because she was embarrassed by how the situation had ended up like this.

"Perhaps, my thoughts were shallow. Since my head is bad. But despite that, the terms didn't appear that bad. That's why I, tried to induce her like that, but..... the Earl's situation-."

"Wasn't that normal?"

"That's-right. The Earl, was a bit, broken..... so it was difficult for that kind of inducement to work, it was that kind of situation."

.....I thought about it.

If you think about it now, the fact that the Earl at the time had destroyed the 7th branch office.

She willingly fastened the catalysts of 12 otherworldly gods to her body and made herself into a nuclear bomb.

The fact that she had become a psychopath like this, and refused contact with anyone while living as a blood-covered savage of a girl.

By all these facts, how much of a saving grace were these otherworldly beings to her?

Of course, something like this is laughable. I had no other choice but to feel something in particular towards the otherworldly creatures that the Earl had killed, especially the Koreans.

However..... even if that was the case.

“The thing you said to me, that you want me to help the Earl. Gia Batsand. Did you mean that the Earl, for starters, needs to have at least some of her emotions returned to normal?”

Gia let out a chuckle as if what I said was going too far.

“I told you, it wasn’t something as calculative as that. But, who knows…… it might have slightly been like that.”

“What do you mean by slightly. The Earl.”

Believes in you without even the slightest bit of doubt.

That’s right- trust.

Before she left, the Earl said this to me, (Think of a good method. A method where I won’t have to incline to either the Mage Tower or the Fedchants.) if I did so then she’ll consider sending me home. It’s obvious. That fellow, who’s unable to read the inner workings of a situation, wouldn’t have been able to realize the truth that Gia had used the check signed under the Earl’s House on purpose and that she had also returned after having purposely failed in the talks with the Black Dragon street.

Simply because she didn’t want to see the sight of the subordinate she trusts, Gia who’s like a sibling to her, blame herself. Because she believed that whether she becomes in debt to the Mage Tower, or lowers her head to the Fedchants, Gia will be hurt either way.

On the other hand, for me, since the Earl was already aware that my head was good. She wanted me to work harder by giving me a sense of purpose.

Are you telling me that this sort of easily readable bundle of text hasn’t been read by her already?

“I’m not sure.” Gia now had a tired smile on her face. “Lately, even my head hurts.”

“Your head?”

“Wearing a mask is difficult. It’s also difficult for someone like me, who

has never been proficient in schemes in the first place, to do something like inducing someone and acting like a spy. Think about it. Why would I have requested someone like you to correct Her Excellency?”

“Someone like me, huh?”

“That’s right. Yujin, I can’t correct the Earl. Even if I’ve been working that hard for the Earl, and believed that I was something similar to the Earl’s sibling, despite all that, I failed at changing the Earl even slightly. But you were different. You achieved that while in a situation where everything was hostile against you, and within a few days since being summoned, at that. …Do you know what I thought while I was watching that?”

Normally,

I believed that people, intelligent life-forms, must be treated like equal beings,

Therefore, I believed that I shouldn’t behave sarcastically or belittle the other party, but…….

“How would I know something like a fool’s thought?”

Gia let out a hearty laugh.

“Ahaha. A fool…… a fool, huh. I see……. Yeah. You’re right. I’m a fool. An idiot who has only trained with a sword until now, a blue haired gorilla whose brain even consists of muscles. That me, until now, has continued, contin–ued, to do spy stuff that I’ve never been used to. I sent the information that I gained from talking to the people who get summoned from other worlds to the Mage Tower, I induced the Earl towards a direction where she’ll become in debt to the Mage Tower…… and the Earl didn’t change…… I was reaching my limit…… and while I was in that state, you appeared.”

The hearty laugh started to change into a bitter one. I wordlessly gazed at the spy of the Mage Tower who the Earl trusted.

The stillness was flowing.

The silence broke.

“Gia.”

“Hm?”

“From now on, I need you to move as I tell you to.”

“What?”

The blue haired and blue eyed female knight looked at me with a dumbfounded gaze. I spoke.

“For starters, I need you to stop, being a spy for the Mage Tower.”

“.....What?”

“Also, before you quit, go back to the Black Dragon Street while pretending to still be a spy. Say whatever you can and bring back evidence that the Fedchants had forged the documents. Say something like (We can put her in an even bigger trap like this) and it should work.

A cold glint was shining in Gia’s blue eyes.

“And if I refuse?”

“Then I’ll inform the Earl of your identity. I’ll tell her that you, the person who went around saying that you’re like a sibling to her, was actually secretly communicating with the Earl’s enemies. In that moment, even you should know what the Earl of the Silver Lion would do. Don’t forget it. The fact that you’re serving a lord with an ability that you can’t possibly run away from.”

“You’re going to threaten me in this situation? If I had to say that I’m impressed, then I am, Yujin.”

“It’s a threat that you have no other choice but to follow.”

“That’s interesting. If there wasn’t a single misunderstanding about your words, then I really would have obeyed without a complaint.”

“A misunderstanding?”

Gia nodded her head and lowered her body slightly towards me.

“Do you think, Her Excellency the Earl, will trust your words?”

Silence.

“Are you not misunderstanding your place, Yujin? To Her Excellency, you’re nothing more than an otherworldly being who has been around for merely 5 days. But I’m no different than the Earl’s sibling. Even if you were able to slightly change the Earl, an act which I wasn’t able to achieve, that fact doesn’t change. If perhaps, you and I were to get into an argument, then the Earl will obviously lean towards my side.”

That was a type of declaration. She had an unwavering expression on her face as if she were speaking a mountainous truth. I was quite deeply moved by the fact that I was able to witness that expression, which I’ve seen several times in Korea, here in this world. Moreover, it must be true that the fact was actually unwavering.

That’s why, it was okay.

Since that was the truth- I, could say this.

“I think so as well.”

“What?”

“Since the Earl will believe your words…… the blackmail is established.”

I took out my smartphone from my pocket. iPhone6. I showed to Gia Batsand, the thing that had recorded our entire conversation.

Gia’s smile shattered.



Her smile broke apart and revealed a stunned expression.

“Smartphone?”

Yeah, a smartphone.

“Re……corded?”

Of course.

“Don’t make me lau…… That doesn’t make sen…… wait. Something like a smartphone…… 5 days has passed, right? There’s no way, there’ll be any battery left. Adding to that, there’s no cell tower here to connect to. It shouldn’t have been able to last even two days since it would have automatically sent out signals in order to find a cell tower.”

Battery, huh. The fact that a knight from another world could point that out was frightening.

Also, to comment that ‘it should have automatically sent out signals in order to find a cell tower’, was an eerily accurate remark.

However.

“It shouldn’t be that much of a surprise that you can turn the power off on a smartphone.”

Gia Batsand had an expression on her face that appeared like her heart was shattering.

“I kept it off. And, when I was being stepped on by the Earl, I turned it back on. Of course, it still lets out discharge even when it’s off, but something like trying to find a cell tower, like you mentioned, doesn’t happen. Moreover, thanks to the needlessly advanced technical skill in my world, smartphones can hold out for 5 days and barely lose any battery.”

“You, bastard……!!”

“Now then, you understand the situation now, right? Will you do as I ask? Go to the Black Dragon Street. Make proof that can be used to refute against the Fedchants. After that, the situation will be resolved once you betray the Mage Tower, Black Dragon Street, and the Fedchants. Referentially, this isn’t a threat, but an order.”

An immense murderous intent exploded out from Gia.





Gia's tone sank down quietly.

"Since earlier, Yujin, you've been saying this and that while putting on airs....."

Her glaring eyes felt like fangs.

"It goes without saying, I did say with my own mouth that I'm an idiot, but no matter how much that may be the case."

A noise that sounded like something was scraping bones, resonated.

"Why are you trying to ignore the fact that I also have a choice of my own?"

That sword, was raised while severing the darkness. That wretched, smile.

"Take your life and take that smartphone. If I just do that, then everything will be over, right? Yujin, you idiot. For someone who can't even subdue me in a time of emergency, if you blab your mouth that much then the side that'll end up dying is yours. You've prattled on about this and that, but in the end, strength.....!!"

The reason why Gia Batsand's words were cut off in such a weird place, was because I had escaped towards the hallway. "Eeeng!?" I didn't give any particular response and passed through the door that led to the hall.

"Huh..... that, hey!? Hey, hey!" I refreshingly ignored something like the sound that was coming from behind me.

I ran out into the hall.

Shortly after, as I predicted, Gia Batsand ran through the doorway as well. The sound of metal colliding with each other emanated from her body.

She was slow. By the looks of it, since I was wearing casual clothes, I was faster than her because she was equipped with armor. As I planned earlier,

I entered the cell, B-7, the room that could be opened and closed and also had something similar to a Korean's remains and a coffin laying inside of it. After that, I quickly closed the door. Belatedly, Gia Batsand, who was chasing after me, kicked the door.

Bang.....!!

It's obvious, but it didn't open. No matter how much you kick a pull door, do you think it'll open?

"Yujin!! You, *Tero*.....!! Open, the door!"

Am I insane? Why would I open the door?

I'm just a normal male student.

How could I possibly win against a knight like you in a frontal assault? Thinking logically.

"This bastard.....!!"

Say what you want. Since even talking would be a waste of time at this point, I won't do it.

Calmly, after stroking my prayer beads once.

I pulled out the ropes from under my clothes. The tools I found in the torture room. For reference, Gia, as long as you don't immediately try to pull open the door, I didn't plan to give you any more opportunities to open it. I hastily tied the rope around the door handle and pulled on it until it made an audible sound. It was around then that Gia tried to pull open the door, but this side as well, while keeping to the knot tying method, had desperately pulled and fastened the rope to the coffin.

Indeed, investigating the hallway, torture chamber, and the cells beforehand was the right idea. A match is always decided by the difference in information one side has.

Bang! Bang! Since it didn't work after pulling, Gia started kicking the door again. Was she upset? If you kick like that, then only your leg will hurt.

“Eeegh…… Yujin, you…… is that it? I understand what you’re thinking.”

What I’m thinking?

“Do you plan to *Girte*…… make a deal, with me?”

Why a deal?

“You plan to keep shutting yourself away in there, right? If you do that, then the winner won’t be decided, so you’ll wait until either Her Excellency comes down here herself, summons me, or summons you, right, Yujin!?”

The hell is she talking about?

“That’s why, before that happens -kneel, Is that what you’re trying to say? Ha! You coward.”

Ah, damn it.

In any case, this girl really is amusing. She keeps making me want to give her a rebuttal.

“This Gia Batsand, no matter how big of a weakness of hers is being seized- not only do I have no intention of submitting to someone who’s weaker than me but”

I want to give her a reply, but I’m busy with my preparations.

“Also, because of that pathetic calculation of yours, you’ll die in there pitifully.”

Wait wait. I’m almost done…….

“The fact that you’ll meet your end by the same skill that saved you from the guillotine yesterday. That is,”

Almost…….“

“The irony of contradiction!”

“You want to make bad jokes even in this kind of situation-!?!”

Hah.

This kind of things isn't my preference.

Ah, it was the same yesterday and the same today. I end up unintentionally..... really.

“Till the very end, we had a good talk.”

“What are you talking about!? It was good for you alone!”

“It'll be difficult from now on, to meet another tsukkomer like you.”

“You made a weird word.....!?”

“Perhaps you may have been my last chance, Gia says regretfully as Gia looks up at the sunset.”

“I'll pretend I didn't here that one just now! In the first place, there's no sunset here!”

“Is that blazing sunset not contained within, the chest of that gentlemen?”

“How hot is that chest supposed to be!?!?”

And then, a sudden-silence.

Shortly after.

“Kuroso-Extro 〈絶大切斷 / Great Rending Slice〉”

A white diagonal line formed on the iron door before my eyes.

Fla--ash.....!!

Clang.....!! Craaaaaaash.....!! A flash of light that felt as if it were going insane. A line of ruin that caused the door to twist, whirl, and collapse. It felt as if space itself was being torn, crushed, and collapsing in on itself. Bang.....!! The door fell in an unamusing manner, and Gia Batsand was standing in her sword swinging posture on the opposite side of that door

while trying to catch her breathe.

The problem is, Gia.

That technique, you showed it to me yesterday.

And.

At that time, I already realized that the cooldown for it is severe.

That's why.

Right before the door fell,

Something like the lamp bottle that I threw,

You being unable to deflect it

Is obvious

right?

Clash.....!!

“.....!!!??”

The lamp bottle shattered and the liquid that was inside of it got all over Gia. She flailed about in the air. I didn't ask her if she wanted to dance.

Rather, she threw me a question first.

“What's..... this?”

What do you think?

It's sticky and has viscosity.

The thing you and your perverted master kept saying was delicious.....

“H-Heaven Brand..... Milk?”

Plus blood and organs.

Momentarily sorting out the situation : Do you remember the lamp bottle I discovered in the prison guard room? I figured I could put something in it and use it in a time of emergency. But there was no liquid inside of it. I could barely afford to drink the limited water supply I had, so that was out of the question, and urine lacked viscosity. Compared to those, there's a sense of weight to the blood and organs, and if you get it all over the opposition, then you can blind them temporarily, however, it can dry up and harden, so in order to prevent that solidifying, I had poured in some Heaven Brand Milk. That's the story.

“You..... you said you didn't like things that were too stimulating.”

Towards the girl who couldn't see in front of herself so she was flailing around.

“Gia, the irony of contradiction.”

I rushed towards her.

“Is something like this.”

.....At that instant.

The Gia, who had her eyes sealed and was flailing around, regained her posture instantly. It was literally an expert's master, an astonishment's surprise. She then, put her blade in order, and towards the approaching shadow, the shape of the body, [\[2\]](#)

“Don't make me laugh, I'm.....!!”

Flash.....!!

“The Silver Lion Royal Guaaard.....!!”

The glint of her blade, roared out rampageously.

“Did you think…… to some cheap brawl like this…….”

The sound of something being sliced.

“That I’d lose……!?!”

The body fell after being sliced into two pieces,

the thing that originally existed

……here in B-7

「The remains」

“Gia Batsand, if you really want me to give you a tackle that much, then……!!”

I didn’t offer any silent prayer, but instead, I stepped and crushed those remains, and rushed towards Gia’s body.

“I’ll become that tackle……!!”

Bang……!!

Along with a somewhat dangerous line, I threw out my- desperate, body tackle.

She couldn’t focus her gaze, her posture was broken because she had just swung her blade, and the ground was slippery because of the Heaven Brand Milk, organs, and blood.

This is the critical strike……!! Telling her to not fall down was impossible now. An impossible situation!

Thud……!!

The Silver Lion Royal Guard, The Earl of the Silver Lion’s Sword, Gia Batsand- fell down, just like that.

“Kuh……!”





“Stop.”

Before she could struggle, I got on top of her and placed the blade which I took from the torture chamber to her neck, and with this, it was-checkmate.

Although it seemed like she hadn't recovered her vision yet, that clear sensation was enough to completely seal her movements.

“Yu.....jin......”

While biting her lips,

With a terrible face,

a face that appeared as if she were about to cry, she looked up at me.

“That's right.”

I tapped that nose of hers and looked down at her.

“The match has been decided.”



Even when I removed the blade and stood up, Gia didn't fight back. She didn't weep or struggle either.

As if the determination she had to charge towards me and take my life had disappeared-the person that was here now was, like usual, the Silver Lion Earl's loyal blade, the BL addicted female knight who loved to make bad jokes, Gia Batsand.

The girl, who was lost in thought with a composed look on her face, let out a sigh.

“Since when?”

“Hm?”

“I’m talking about your battle preparations. There’s no way that all of those things were located conveniently in those spots. Furthermore, even when you ran out of the torture room and went into that cell, you moved swiftly as if you had it all planned out.”

“Well, of course, since I did have it planned out.”

“Why? Did you know you were going to fight me?”

“Not in particular…… it’d be great if something like that didn’t happen, but, since it’s very well possible that I’ll have to fight someone while I’m down here, I merely made a plan that could counteract anyone. If you exclude the occasions where either of you two came down to occasionally interact with me, I had spare time. A lot of it.”

Gia Batsand must have been thinking about those words since she had fallen silent.

I waited patiently.

Shortly after, Gia Batsand asked me a question.

“What did you want me to do?”

“I told you earlier.”

“I’ve said it before, but I’m an idiot. My head isn’t that great. Please summarize it for me.”

Haa.

“……You shouldn’t keep calling yourself an idiot.”

“You talk well for a person who called me an idiot as well.”

“Well, that’s that, and this is this.”

“Gianism<sup>[3]</sup>, is it?”

“That’s not right. This is that, and that is that, is what Gianism is.”

“Is that so? So I even had that mixed up because I’m an idiot.”

“No, like I said. You shouldn’t say with your own mouth that you’re an idiot and that your head is bad…… that’s not right.”

I fiddled with my prayer beads as I recalled my Goddess who was laying in a hospital. Gia looked at me, who was like that, with slightly prying eyes.

I summarized it for her.

“In any case : Go to the Black Dragon Street, receive the evidence to refute against the Fedchants, and then betray the Black Dragon Street • Fedchant • Mage Tower. With that, the case will be over.”

It appeared as if Gia were squirming her shoulders. She then let out a sigh.

“And so? What do you gain?”

I didn’t respond. To be exact, Gia continued her words before I was able to do so.

“Is it, that? The thing Her Excellency said? Do something, and resolve this incident well. If you do that, then I’ll send you home-this?”

“Ah, if it’s that, then that really was a tempting offer…….”

No, really. It truly sounded alluring, but.

I shook my head and let out a sigh.

“Wrong. Though it did enthrall me.”

Gia froze and looked at me. I scratched the back of my head.

“In the first place……, if I tried to help you with that intention in mind, then I wouldn’t have done something like threatening you.”

“?”

“Let’s say I did plan to go back like that, if I did then I wouldn’t have done something like meddling in your situation and order you to betray the Mage Tower, right? If I’m leaving, then I would have spoken in a way where you only have to cooperate with me this one time.”

“I don’t understand that well.”

“If I explain it in a language that’s easy to understand, then when I told you to betray the Mage Tower, I didn’t mean that you should return to being the Earl of the Silver Lion’s loyal knight. That wasn’t my intention.”

Gia still had a clueless expression on her face. Regardless, I spoke.

“Your sword, devote it to me.”

Silence.

“.....What?”

“Why are you so surprised? Nothing will change. You’ll remain as the Earl’s loyal knight. However, that sword will be devoted to me and your real intention will remain with me as well. I’m telling you to move as I command from now on.”

An alarmed glint appeared in Gia’s eyes.

“You, what are you.....!?”

“Relax. I don’t have any ulterior motives against your Earl..... You said it before. The reason why you acted as a spy for those guys is because you didn’t have to point your blade at the Earl, right? It’s the same. Orders like killing the Earl or telling you to hurt her-I will never, ever say those types of words. That’s why, Gia Batsand.”

I spoke towards the girl who was looking at me.

“Give your sword to me.”

Gia took out her sword and tossed it to me.

.....Even for her, it was a high-class gag.

“Take me seriously. Don’t make me snitch<sup>[4]</sup> on you to the Earl.”

“Do it. I’ll make you into a real eunuch then.”

“Hey, we decided the winner already…….”

Gia let out a groan. She still had a doubtful look on her face. I could guess why.

“Are you curious as to why I’m not trying to go back?”

Seeing as she didn’t reply, it seems I was right.

I sighed.

“Of course, there’s a chance that she’ll send me back home after this incident is resolved and I’m able to properly persuade her. But, how long will that last?”

“How long?”

“Yeah. At any rate, the Earl has a catalyst that’s related to me, you know? I’m in a situation where I can be summoned at any time. If I were to return in that kind of situation, then can you truly view that as having ‘gone home’? Every day will be filled with anxiety. I’ll go to sleep worried that I’ll one day wake up back in that cell.”

“……That’s.”

“And, what if I really am summoned again?”

Silence.

“The affection points…… though I don’t like that expression, will have reset, and the mental state of the Earl will have reset as well. What am I going to do if I end up meeting my demise because something like that happened?”

“Uh, but. If you establish a condition where you can’t be summoned back…….”

“Certainly, if I talk to her well, then I might be able to return after making her give me her word of honor. However, though she may not summon me anymore, what about the others? Koreans will keep disappearing one or two people at a time, right? Since I’m currently the only otherworldly being that the earl treats as an equal, then wouldn’t those people end up in exactly the same situation as I was at first, ripped apart, crushed, and killed?”

In contrast, if I stay here, then I’m sure the Earl wouldn’t summon another Korean. Since I believe that she’s a person with at least that much consideration. No matter how much of a special existence Gia is, and I’m pitiable in comparison, she’s someone who tried to let me go in order to not let Gia feel anguish.

“So you’re saying that you’ll sacrifice yourself in the stead of the people of your world?”

“Sacrifice, huh…… It’s not something as distinguished as that, but.”

I let out a sigh while I rotated my beads.

“Except, among those destined to be ‘summoned Koreans who will die’, isn’t there a chance that someone I know will be among them……? That’s it.”

There are several, people in Korea that I don’t want to lose.

Starting from, my sleeping Goddess, Minhee.

“A sandcastle doesn’t collapse because of the waves. It does so because of the fact that it was made from sand.”

“What an admirable saying.”

“I see that the requirement level of feeling admiration is low…….”

“The reason why a glass castle is transparent isn’t because of the sunlight that shines down onto it, but because it was made from glass.”

Uh, it somehow sounds cool…… is something that didn’t come to mind. Seriously.

“Well, in any case, I’m saying that I can’t go back happily with that sort of anxiety looming over behind me.”

I was unable to know what this blue haired and blue eyed female knight thought about those words. However, it was clear that she was still hesitating.

This knight really doesn’t listen despite having her weakness seized and having lost the fight…….

Or.

“I also can’t leave the Earl of the Silver Lion like this.”

Gia twitched as if she were waiting for these words. I kept talking.

“You said this before. That it seems as if, I made the Earl, a bit-softer.”

“.....”

“A reason why that’s not completely a good thing, is because that means it’s become that much easier for nuisances to approach the Earl compared to before, right?”

If I’m-the one who slightly released that seal, then.

If someone has to take responsibility, then it has to be me.

“A-Are you saying that you’ll protect Her Excellency?”

“Rather than that, a continuation of what I said earlier, I’m only protecting my world. If perhaps, it becomes really bad…… if Her Excellency the Earl is passed over to the Mage Tower, then the people who will receive harm are the otherworlders, which includes the people from my world.”

“.....Yeah.”

Gia lowered her head. She had a distressed face.

I decided to encourage her a bit.



“Though I will do whatever I can to help the Earl as well.”

Gia froze up and raised her head. I continued.

“You made a request, right? Please help Her Excellency.”

Gia opened her eyes wide.

And I, while staring into those eyes of hers, smiled quietly.

“You should already be aware since you saw the way I fought earlier, but…… I’m cowardly, you know? I don’t know anything about 1:1 fights, a knight’s duty, and a noble’s pride. Since that’s the case, even if I help out, anything above what I’m capable of is a bit.”

Cut me some slack. Anything more than that would be difficult.

No, really.

“Anyway, that’s it. This is fine, right? Let’s start cleaning up and retire for the day.”

I wonder if it was because I talked for a long time but my throat felt rough. However, the only thing within my vicinity that can be drunk is the Heaven Brand Milk…….

Should I try it?

No, I can’t. That Mr/Miss. Angel is also an excellent person.

But I’m feeling parched.

……No, like I said, I’m a cowardly human in the end.

Albeit, since I don’t like things that are too stimulating, I won’t drink it.

“Is that so. I think I understand now.”

When I lifted my gaze, I could see Gia Batsand nodding her head.

“Yujin, you’re a frighteningly nosy guy, aren’t you?”

“What are you saying. Stop with the needless comments.”

“No, I’m serious. It’s good, Yujin.”

Gia walked in front of me and got down on one knee.

“Although my lord will always be Her Excellency the Earl, as long as you do not commit any direct harm to her, my sword is yours. I shall cut down your enemies, destroy your obstacles, and be an ally to your will.”

“I promise.”

I assured her and placed my hand on her shoulder.



After cleaning up our battlefield, and on our way back to the torture chamber.

There are several problems that occur when you get too caught up in a moment and atmosphere, one of those things is the feeling of embarrassment. Though I didn’t feel any at the moment, it seems Gia did. Gia, who was casting sidelong glances with a red face, eventually cleared her throat.

“But really, what are you?”

“Hm? What?”

“Certainly, Yujin, your conclusion is ideal, but.”

“It’s also a conclusion that anyone can arrive at.”

“The part of it being something that anyone can arrive at is a question in itself, and people are beings that aren’t able to make quick decisions like that. There should be a place that you want to go back to and someone you wish to see, but to throw all that away and-.”

“Who said I threw those away? I’m just going to observe until the

situation becomes a bit better.”

“Even so, it’s still impressive. To decide that you’ll stay in a world that you’ve never seen before.”

“Is it that impressive?”

“That’s right. People like you, that is. People who have a set goal and, without hesitation, put their all into that goal, we call those type of people *Kurosotia* here, but do you know what it is in Korean?”

“What?”

“It means Mental Armor<sup>[5]</sup>.”

“I really don’t like this world…….”

“It also means hero. It means hero as well.”

“Say that first.” I showed a wry smile on my lips. “I’m really, really grateful that you’re telling me that, but.”

I’m, not a hero nor do I possess a Mental Armor.

“If anything, I’m the opposite. I’m full of faults.”

I’m simply someone who has some experience in overcoming bullying.

Someone who broke and lost precious things several times during that process.

Because I had imprinted, engraved, and carved onto myself that I can’t get any of those things back, That’s why I no longer wished for the things I possessed to become broken right from the start again.

Someone who thinks that he wants to do whatever he is capable of.

Someone who thinks solely that.

“A normal high school boy, is it?”

“If there’s something that I can do, then I just want to do it.”

Outside of that, a reason why I want to stay here -there’s also my own personal selfishness.

Although I’m not sure how exactly the magic system in this world works.

Perhaps.

If I had the power of the thing called magic.

Then I may truly be able to make Minhee, my Goddess of Flames who’s currently asleep, get up-I kept that kind of hope buried deep in my chest.

“.....By the way, Gia. What about you?”

Gia had a puzzled look on her face. I elaborated for her in detail.

“Why did you act like a spy for the Mage Tower in the first place? You’re always thinking about the Earl foremost.”

“That, huh.”

This time a wry smile appeared on Gia’s lips. I spoke.

“In the first place, you’re someone who went around saying that your own head was bad. Despite that, behind that Earl you cherish so much, you tried to induce her here and there. Regardless of whether it causes any direct harm or not, a betrayal is still a betrayal.”

“Mm.”

“You should have a reason. So why’d you do it? Did you also have some interest towards other world technology? Were you deluded by the tempting words of those Mage Tower people?”

“Do I have to, give a response?”

“Tell me. The person who’s going to become my sword shouldn’t hide things from me.”

I told her that while adamantly staring straight into her eyes. Gia twitched! and it seemed as if she were trying to find a place to put her eyes, but I firmly gripped her shoulders and didn't let her go. A stillness fell upon us like that.

The wavering Gia Batsand eventually spasmodically shook her head.

“T-There are two reasons.”

“Two?”

“Yeah. The first reason is because of a prophecy. The individual of the Mage Tower that I came into contact with was the 5th branch's manager, the one who has the 7th position of the Sky Barriers, New Design Foresight(Lord : Timing), Touma Soh. An individual like that stated that an unavoidable calamity will approach Her Excellency, and if I cooperate with them, then they'll help Her Excellency avoid that calamity.”

“.....A calamity? What kind exactly?”

“They didn't tell me that part. Just that it'll arrive this year, that it'll endanger the Earl and the world, and that it was similar to a ball that's been tossed into the air. No matter how much you try to stop it, it'll return.”

“The possibility that the prophecy itself was a lie they made up in order to pull you in?”

“.....Of course, I thought about it. However, although Touma Soh is an unbelievable piece of trash when it comes to something that happened in the past and the present, there's a rumor that says he's a man that will absolutely not lie when it comes to the future. Well, I also considered the possibility that that very rumor was a lie as well, but.....”

Gia didn't say anything more and lowered her gaze. I understood her feeling. Even in modern day Earth, there are a countless number of people who get deceived by pseudo fortune-tellers because of that 'perhaps' feeling. Furthermore, wasn't the reason why I was able to get past the second day here because I had used one of those pseudo fortune-teller's techniques? Much more than that, this is a world where magic exists. It would have been difficult for someone like Gia to deal with.

“You said today was January, right?”

“That’s right. ……That’s also the reason why I felt more desperate.”

I see. I let out a sigh.

“I’m sorry.”

Gia froze. I bowed my head.

“I spoke thoughtlessly. In the end, even that betrayal was done because you wanted to protect your Earl from a calamity.”

Whether the prophecy was true or not, Gia believed it was true and moved busily in order to protect the Earl. There’s no room for doubt in this female knight’s loyalty.

“……Not really. They weren’t entirely thoughtless words. Your words weren’t exactly wrong either, were they? In the first place, the reason I got that upset was because of that. The fact that I couldn’t refute it, the rage that’s supposed to be directed towards the opposition was returned to myself, that feeling hurt.”

“Mm. Since I’m aware of that, I’m sorry.”

Having said that, I raised my head and looked straight at Gia.

“Though I said that I wouldn’t protect the Earl earlier…… if the situation is like that, and if that calamity or whatever is true, then I’ll do whatever I can about those as well.”

“……Yujin.”

Of course, even if I say that, it’ll be within the line of what I’m capable of, I didn’t say that out loud.

“You said there were two reasons. The first reason was because of the prophecy, but what about the second?”

Gia twitched. I wonder if it’s because her hair and eyes were blue, but the chromatic contrast with those and her red face made it stick out

peculiarly.

“I-It’s a personal reason.”

“What kind?”

“T-That’s, mm, i-it’s really a personal reason!”

“.....No, you don’t have to go as far as to go beat red like that and flutter your arms. Hm. It really must be personal, huh?”

“That’s right. Aaaaanyway, the conversation has been dragged on far too long. Let’s make haste. Her Excellency the Earl must be waiting.”

She hurriedly cut off her words, turned her body, and resumed walking. No matter how I looked at it, it must have really been an immensely personal reason. Though it makes me needlessly more curious, digging in for more information wouldn’t be polite here.

If you think from a common perspective, then something like that Ahyeon fellow actually having returned back to Korea safely, Gia felt attached to that guy, thus she wanted to see him once more, so she accepted the Mage Tower’s plan to use the Earl of the Silver Lion’s ability deliberately..... Mm, this is more like something that’d come out in a morning drama. It’s also a story that doesn’t fit Gia that much.

I shook off my delusions and was about to follow after Gia until I noticed something.

On Gia’s back, something swaying near the vicinity of her rear attracted my attention. It was a book that was shoved into the back pocket of her knight uniform. Whether I wanted to or not, the sight of the book’s cover with a picture of a glasses wearing man smiling refreshingly and a title written in Korean entered my vision. ‘Student body president’s cross-cultural exchange ~Elf boy volume~’ Though I could only see the upper portion of the book since the rest was covered by her pocket, there was a picture of an elven boy with tears in his eyes on the cover as well. At any rate, this girl’s BL addiction is really..... wait.

.....

It can't be, right?

.....

.....Yeah. It can't be.

That's probably not it..... Yeah, probably not..... There's no way.....



.....Thus, the conclusion of the 5th day which had made me feel like I would die because of various reasons.

“Hmm. Mr. Yujin. Are you really okay with that, Mr. Yujin?”

“About what?”

“You know. Didn't you say that you wanted to reside upstairs?”

“That's okay, isn't it? The incident was resolved well, but who knows when something else will happen again.”

The case was handled well. Although there was a slight trouble, Gia Batsand was successful in making the Black Dragon Street forge documents that could be used as evidence to refute against the Fedchants. By the time she had returned, I had just finished writing the Earl's speech. A civil discourse followed after. The Earl of the Silver Lion received applause once more.

The Black Dragon Street and the Fedchant are probably waiting for Gia to stab the Earl in the back, but something like that won't be happening anymore since Gia had returned back to the Earl's side. The day they find out what happened, will probably also be the day that the Mage Tower will start scheming again, but at the very least, there'll be peace here for the time being.

“But why are you acting conceited? The one who worked hard and received the evidence was my, Miss Gia Batsand, you knooow?”



“That’s why I told you. It would have been a big deal if I didn’t tell Gia what to say. Didn’t Gia say that herself, as well?”

“Mm. Certainly, Gia said that herself, but……. For some reason, I heard these unusually servile words like, ‘I would have absolutely failed if Yujin wasn’t here!’ or ‘Yujin is the sun and I’m a sunspot.’ and had the merits turned towards you…….”

The things Gia did from behind. Since we couldn’t tell the Earl about the double contract that was established between Gia and me, we ended up dealing with the situation like this. If she didn’t know about what happened in the background, then this would have become ‘Something Gia went out and took care of by herself’. If that happened, then it would’ve been difficult for me to put myself as the Earl’s benefactor, and the Earl wouldn’t treat me more generously, either.

“It’s somewhat, how should I say it, a bit……Mmm…… like that-ish?”

“Don’t worry about it.”

“Is that what I should do?”

Despite that, the Earl of the Silver Lion had a bitter face. Seriously, this girl’s intuition is scary. Well, she soon dusted her coat and turned around.

“But in any case, are you really okay with not going back? Who knows if opportunities like this, will be often or not?”

“I’m fine. Even if I do go back, I feel like I’d be summoned back the next day with you saying <Did you have a nice vacation?>.”

“N-N-N-Nonsense. Something like that, I won’t do it, you know?”

I knew it, she really did intend on doing so.

“That being said, just give me proper vacations.”

“Hmm?”

“Literally as I said. If this world uses the same week system, then let me go back during the weekends so I can take care of things.”

The Earl of the Silver Lion, who was listening with wide eyes, showed a characteristically bad smile. While brushing her slightly stuck out tongue against her sharply glinting canines, she formed a silver line.

“Ah hah ha ah……. You were hoping for something like that? Mr. Yujin, it’s unfooooortunate. You shouldn’t decide things like that, on your oooown, you knooow?”

“No, it’s not something I decided in particular……. That Gia was the one who said to do it.”

“Hm? Gia did? Why?”

“That’s, she said it was about time to start looking at new BL material…… Hey.”

“Yes?”

“You, it feels like your gaze has become incredibly gentle right now.”

“Ah ha ah……? What are you saying, Mr. Yujin? For me, to have a warm gaze, isn’t there no way that’d happen?”

“Yeah. That’s why I feel really creeped out and uncomfortable. Put those away, those eyes of yours.”

“Mm.”

The Earl’s eyes changed back. It didn’t return back entirely, but instead, turned into a mellow gaze for some reason.

“No, well…… Even for people like me who have black blood pumping through their veins, whenever we see a consistent person, our hearts feel waaarm…….”

“That Gia was a healing item, huh…….”

“It’s quite warm when we’re together.”

“Is she a heater?”

“If you ask how much, then like a feet pad.”

Then only your feet will get warm! is a rebuttal I didn't make.

I recovered my pace.

“In any case, what will I end up doing when I go upstairs?”

The Earl of the Silver Lion looked as if she were thinking intently.

“Hm~ that's right, huh. What should you do?”

“For the time being, I'd like something that's a bit free. I'd like to learn the language here first.”

“Ah ha. That's right. Mm. For starters, a miscellaneous worker. How about physical labor? You'll go on all the errands.”

“Do you believe that's putting the right man in the right place?”

“While you're at it, you'll cut down your sleep time, and also write my speeches for meee.”

“Go easy on me.”

The Earl blinked her two eyes.

“Mm..... no, but, I'm being serious here, that, uh, do you plan to be exempted? That won't work out well. Heughghgh, because, if you do that, then, mm, theeen.”

“I wanted to say this before, but, that's not a very good thing to do so it'd be a good idea to stop.”

“Uh!? Uuuuuuu.....”

Okay! I said it. I was able to say it! Right in front of her.

Certainly, treating someone like a human being is a treatment to receive and use.

Well, anyway.

“I get what you’re mostly trying to say. You’re saying that it won’t look good in the eyes of others, right?”

“Pretty much.”

“Mm…… where would be good? Do you have any recommendations?”

“Hm? You could do something related to me. Or, since there’s no apprentice knight under Gia, I’m wondering how it’d be if you did something like that. We’re the only two people who know about your circumstances, after all.”

I pondered about it. But isn’t an apprentice knight similar to a servant who has to do things like, for example, preparing the armor and sword Gia uses? Since Gia is supposed to be my sword, that role doesn’t really sound appropriate. If that’s the case then, maybe something related to the Earl…….

“Referentially, relating to me, Mr. Yujin, the role of foot mat is vacant, Mr. Yujin.”

“I’ll be Gia’s apprentice knight.”

The Earl displayed her canines and giggled. Damn it.

Well, this is until I learn how to speak.

“And so, what about my holidays? It’s fine since it’s still winter vacation, but I’m going to be in my third year of high school soon.”

“Hu? For now, since you’ve become Gia’s, why not discuss it with her?”

“I’ll probably, 100%, have to go and buy BL stuff. Due to Miss Main-Knight Gia.”

“I think so as well……. I’ll give you a cycle. However, that’ll be a bit later-after adjusting it to the standard operating procedures.”

“What’s the standard operating procedures?”

“7 days of labor every week.”

“Isn’t one week 7 days here?”

“‘Volunteering and sincerity, is the greatest relaxation.’ *Rixxuko–Chidorea.*”

“I don’t know someone like that. Are there no labor laws here, or a labor organization where laborers gather? Like a labor union.”

“Some wicked organization like that, Mr. Yujin, wouldn’t possibly exist, would it now, Mr. Yujin?”

Ah, is that so.

Then I guess the first thing I should do is establish that wicked organization.

I’ll leave alone the bureaucrats, gather the maids, butlers, and the guards……they’re soldiers so would it be a bit difficult? If I can, then do it, if I can’t, then oh well. In any case, I’ll put Gia forward as the manageress and make her the supporter of the union. Good good.

“Anyway, what do you really want?”

When I tilted my head in response, the Earl of the Silver Lion was gazing at me while brushing aside her hair.

“Mm. Just as I said. For you to decide to continue staying here. Do you have some secret plan?”

“I told you, if you’re going to summon me after one day, then…….”

“Nooo. Not that. Putting all those aside-the fact that you, suddenly, wanted to go upstairs, and work.”

She snickered and looked me up and down.

“Are you afraid that if you continue to stay down here like this, you’ll go to the torture chamber again?”

“That’s one thing.”

I answered honestly.

“The bed is also cold and there’s no water to wash with down here.”

“Hmm. In pursuit of comfortability, is it? That’s a believable moootive.”

“Isn’t it fine? Since I’ve been getting unnecessarily involved in your matters here and there, I also wanted to take responsibility for that.”

“Responsibility, huh? Hmm.”

“That’s right. Responsibility.”

Well.

Like how I took your sword today,

And how I thought about establishing a labor union a second ago,

I’ll consume the factions you have one group at a time, and by the time you regain your senses, you probably won’t have any authority left, is what I intended to do, but…….

“I’ll be in your care.”

That’s until you mature a bit more.

It’s something I felt when facing Chanmi, but authority being in the hands of someone who has yet to mature is, in itself, a literal calamity. Regardless of what the calamity of the prophecy is.

I’ll make sure to manage you properly, little Silver Lion.

“Ah ha ah? Though, it feels like you’re thinking of something bad right now?”

“That’s your imagination, imagination.”

“Imaaagination, is it?”

“Now then, let’s both work hard and make the City of Confinement a good place to live in.”

“Hm~mm.”

The Earl of the Silver Lion smirked and lowered her head. Shortly after, she quickly spun around and started to walk in strides up the stairs that were next to the torture room.

While I was watching the back that would always disappear just like that, the Earl suddenly stopped.

Soon after, she took something out from her coat and,

Poof……!!

The Earl, after putting away the handkerchief that was in her hand, was staring at me while standing right before my eyes.

The realization that the Earl had summoned and pulled in me, who was standing still, came a bit after that. The Earl-The Earl of the Silver Lion, spoke.

“What are you doing not following me?”

……Ah, that’s right. Now that I think about it, I have to follow her this time.

The Earl resumed her stride.

I cleared my throat and followed behind that Earl, while putting behind me, the underground that I was beholden to for the past 5 days.

……If perhaps, my story is able to continue.

Similar to how all other people live, that story will, compared to now, start in a slightly higher place.

**Fin.**





## Footnotes

1. [↑] ‘Defense’ and ‘Number’ uses the same letter.
2. [↑] Same phrasing as the poem mentioned in a previous chapter. ‘Expert’s expert, surprise’s surprise’.
3. [↑] [Doraemon reference.](#)
4. [↑] ‘Tell on/snitch’ the first two letters of this word can also be translated as ‘eunuch’.
5. [↑] A Korean slang ‘멘탈갑’.



[Short Story]  
The Story of the Azure Rose Knight

*Conversations in bold means they're talking in this world's language(Not Earth). Furthermore, the POV is thrown all over the place here, so just read this as if it were a general POV. You should be able to figure out who is having which monologue.*

Gia Batsand is a girl who'll be turning 18 this year. However, finding on her a hint of girlishness, that you'd normally see in other girls her age, was difficult.

The first thing that catches the eye is her cold appearance that looks as if even a single drop of blood wouldn't come out if you pierced her skin. The knightly etiquette and martial artist style movements, which she accustomed her body with since a young age, played a role in creating that proud image. The fact that she is capable of using one of the 12 worldly skills and the fact that she's the right hand of the Earl of the Silver Lion, who's occupying the first seat of the Twelve Sky Barriers, and is also referred to as 'the most dangerous mage in the world', she was an untouchable existence like a flower blooming on top of a plateau.

The Azure Rose Knight.

It was around when she was 14-years-old. It was then that she was officially recognized by her teacher for completing her training. From that point on, people started to refer to her as the Azure Rose Knight. To be able to receive a title through one's ability alone, and not through lineage, meant that the individual was able to display incredible skill within a single field, so for someone her age to receive a title was a rare act.

However, Borg Edentras greeted that girl without any respect.

**“To come here at this time, what is it?”**

It's hard to say that his attitude was disrespectful when you consider the fact that this man had also received his title of Lunar Scorpion around the same age Gia received her own and had also made his way up to an executive seat of the Black Dragon Street. Of course, if you consider the fact that Gia was a guest, then this would indeed be a rude behavior, but since Gia was a special guest, in various meanings, Borg believed that this was more appropriate for her.

**“Your orders shouldn’t have been that difficult. Did you come back to hear them again because you couldn’t remember? I did hear that the Azure Rose was dumber than she looked, but I hoped it’d be a false rumor. There’s nothing more annoying than trying to work with an incompetent accomplice. That idiotic appearance is more of a whore’s field of expertise, rather than a knight.”**

Borg spoke while stroking his goatee that spread from the bottom of his lip to his chin in a single line. Instead of a chair or a cushion underneath the bottom of that man, there was a single large demonic dog. This demonic dog, which possessed four arms and two reverse-jointed legs, had all of its nails and teeth pulled out. Although demonic dogs were a lifeform that will characteristically continue to grow out new nails and teeth for the rest of their lives, this demonic dog had constantly had those pulled out whenever that happened and was fated to continue receiving that treatment.

Without feeling unrest, the Azure Rose Knight, Gia Batsand, spoke.

**“It’s true that my head is bad, Borg, however, the reason why I’m here isn’t because I’ve forgotten my duty.”**

If Borg’s current attitude wasn’t a behavior that should be taken towards a knight, then Gia’s attitude wasn’t a behavior that was appropriate to have towards a thief, either. Except, Gia’s case wasn’t similar to Borg’s in the fact that his attitude changed depending on who the opposition was. The Azure Rose Knight had the peculiarity of speaking courteously to even a just born infant. That was one of the influences she received from her teacher.

**“Then what is it? There hasn’t been any contact from the Mage Tower yet.”**

**“I need proof that the Fedchants forged the documents.”**

Borg furrowed his brow.

**“Didn’t we come to an agreement that we didn’t need that?”**

**“If there’s none, then please make some.”**

**“How bold of you. What’s the reason? After having come this**

**far, have you started to feel guilty for deceiving your lord?”**

And that was the decisive reason why Borg didn't respect Gia. In Borg's sense of values, he deemed a dog who obeyed a master as someone who didn't require respect. Borg smirked as he stroke the demonic dog that he was seated on top of.

The Azure Rose Knight gave a sidelong scowl.

**“It's not for that kind of reason. If we possess that sort of evidence, then we can put her into an even bigger trap.”**

**“A bigger trap, is it? For example?”**

**“A trap that'll make the Earl unable to move a single inch. For security reasons, I can't give you the exact details.”**

**“For security reasons, you can't tell me the details, huh?”**

Borg snorted. He scanned Gia up and down once more. Matching his title of Lunar Scorpion, his eyes gave off a dull glow similar to that of the shine a scorpion's carapace emanates under the moonlight.

**“You know, no matter how I look at it, I think you're talking nonsense.”**

**“Is it nonsense?”**

**“Yup. The fact that someone, who was following orders well until now, suddenly comes in and says something weird. That means something peculiar happened.”**

Borg flicked the finger that was stroking his beard.

**“I'll tell you what I think, Azure Rose. I believe that you've had a change of heart. Whether it's because of your petty conscience, your guilt, or your fear, you've suddenly started to have a feeling of doubt in the fact that you've been deceiving your lord. That's why, in order to at least avoid this, you're trying to do whatever you can to receive evidence, while also mentioning some additional plan that probably won't ever happen.”**

In front of the eyes of the Black Dragon Street executive, which were shining cunningly, Gia Batsand inhaled deeply.



⟨The opposition will most likely say something along those lines.⟩

Before coming here, Han Yujin had said that.

⟨It's a valid assumption. Borg is a cunning fellow.⟩

Gia responded as so. The Azure Rose Knight, who was renowned for speaking courteously to anyone, spoke in plain terms when talking in Korean. Like how she was influenced to speak politely because of her teacher, this was the influence of the Korean person who taught her the Korean language. Though that Korean person believed that it was a good thing since it gave her a gap, the only people who could comprehend this were the ones who understood both this world's language and the Korean language, so it could be called a pointless gap<sup>[1]</sup>.

⟨Well, if he's able to become an executive in a group of thieves, then he should be capable of this much. More than that,⟩ As expected, the Korean who was still unable to speak our world's language, Yujin, was unaware of that fact and continued to speak. ⟨You're not particularly the type to come up with a plan, are you? If someone like that were to say that they had a plan, then it's obvious that the opposition would feel contempt and wariness.⟩

Gia cleared her throat. Yujin scratched his temple.

⟨In other words, the first thing we have to do is get past those two things.⟩

⟨Do you mean the contempt and wariness?⟩

⟨Yup. In cases like contempt, it's simple depending on the situation. You can say that it's someone else's idea. Do you have anyone reasonable that you can use the name of? It'd be good if it's the name of a fellow who those

people can't behave carelessly towards, someone that's difficult to confirm the information with, and someone who won't be particularly upset if they find out that you used their name.〉

Even while Yujin was talking, he had a doubtful expression on his face as if he were wondering if someone who perfectly fitted his quota could possibly exist. The problem was that Gia did know an individual like that.

〈There's one person.〉

〈A person, is it? Who?〉

〈My teacher.〉

Yujin fell into thought. Although it's impossible for him to know exactly how powerful Gia is in this world, there's no way that someone, who's the immediate royal knight of a lord and an ability user with the capability of using a shining blade that could cut anything, would be weak. It wouldn't be wrong to assume that the teacher of Gia, who's like that, would be an impressive person.

〈Okay. Then use your teacher's name. Say it was that person's idea. The contempt will be breached with that, but the problem now is the wariness…….〉



**“This isn't my idea, Borg. It's my teacher's idea.”**

Borg twitched. He had kept in mind the possibility that this plan wasn't Gia's, and he had also borne in mind the chances that she'd bring up Yellow-Green Grass' name. However, the individual that was mentioned through Gia's mouth was someone who easily surpassed his expectations.

**“The Amethyst Swamp of Despair(紫毒沼)…… The Draconian Demonic Spear(至嚴魔槍), did?”**

**“I have learned many things from many different people. However, excluding that person, there is no other individual**

**that I refer to as my teacher. Therefore, yes. I'm referring to that person."**

**"Why that person?"**

Borg's brown eyes were tinged in caution. As much as he's working as an executive in the Black Dragon Street, the organization of thieves and swindlers, he knew that much about Gia's teacher as well.

It's a misleading expression. He knew very well about the 'rumors'. The rumor that the person had literally erased an entire labyrinth within a single day, the rumor that they would come to the City of Confinement once a year in order to fight bloody battles with the otherworldly monsters that the Silver Lion Earl would summon for them, the rumor that one of their disciples was a member of the Twelve Zodiacs royal family, the rumor that they would raid non-licensed settlement areas and massacre everyone living there, excluding one or two people in order to make them seek vengeance on them, the rumor that they're unexpectedly gentle and have good manners, etc. The most confusing thing was the fact that all of those rumors had a considerable amount of basis backing them all up.

In other words, it's the same as absolutely nothing being known about Gia's teacher, and in principle, Borg couldn't accept an idea given by that sort of individual. No matter what Gia says, Borg was firmly ready to refuse. Gia watched as Borg's broad-mindedness waned like the glint of a sword which was being sheathed.



⟨If you get past the contempt, then his wariness will get that much worse.⟩

⟨Why's that?⟩

⟨The fact that he can't hold something in contempt means that he can't ignore the issue. If he's unable to ignore the issue, then that means he acknowledged the other person that much as well.⟩



Gia understood.

〈It'd be awkward to just ignore it, but if he accepted the plan, then it'd feel like he was being controlled, something like that?〉

〈Yeah. Therefore, it's a given that his caution will go up. If that Borg fellow is exactly like the person you've grasped him to be, then he'll refuse, since the advantage he has is the fact that he doesn't have to do anything. He has no need to wake up a sleeping wolf.〉

〈Then what should I do?〉

〈For starters, you need to lower their wariness. If you dig up the source of the wariness, which I mentioned earlier, then it's the fact that 'he doesn't know what your intentions are'. That's why you have to create a scheme that he can understand.〉

That's what Yujin said.



Gia Batsand spoke the words that Yujin had said to her earlier.

**“You may have guessed so already, but I’m in the danger of being killed.”**

Although she had started her line with ‘You may have guessed so already’, they were words that Borg didn’t expect one bit. The Azure Rose Knight continued talking while looking at Borg with the cold face that was unique to her.

**“The reason her Excellency the Earl is in this mess is because I used the check signed under the House of the Earl’s name. Moreover, are you unaware of Her Excellency’s temper? Her Excellency informed me to choose between fixing this incident or spending the remainder of my life tied up in the torture chamber.”**

Gia didn’t like the words that were currently coming out of her mouth.

The Earl didn't blame her even slightly. Even for Gia, that was something which she didn't predict. It was also something which she was so thankful for that she could cry.

She was constantly afraid of whether her lord was broken beyond repair, or whether she was latching onto an impossible hope. However, or therefore, this sort of generosity that the Earl showed sometimes made Gia Batsand feel relief.

Although, as an executive of the Black Dragon Street, Borg was proficient at some magic spells, he doesn't have a spell that could read the minds of others. Ever since the death of the head of the Odd Sky Barriers, 350 years ago, no one with such an ability ever existed again, and Borg isn't that great of an existence. Gia's cold face also had the function of being an excellent poker face. Thus, while not realizing what sort of thoughts were going through Gia's head, Borg whistled.

**“Didn't you say that you could handle it yourself? You said that since you two were like siblings, at the very least, your life wouldn't be at risk.”**

**“It seems I thought wrong.”** Gia spoke in a pure tone and lowered her head. **“Since I did not want to die, I needed to find a way.”**

**“So you latched onto your teacher and cried?”**

Borg burst out in laughter. He believed that he understood the situation. His misunderstanding was amplified further once he witnessed Gia avoiding his gaze and biting her lips.

**“I get the gist of what happened.”** A crude glint appeared in the Black Dragon Street executive's brown eyes. **“However, Azure Rose, if what I've understood is correct, then isn't that solely your problem? Why do I have to go through the trouble of helping you? What do I gain?”**

〈 For starters, say something pretentious. 〉 While recalling Yujin's advice, Gia spoke.

**“I'd be grateful if you did it out of your benevolence.”**

**“I don’t give out something like mercy. How do you think I got to this position? Especially if the person is female, something like mercy…… that’s an undeserved emotion.”**

Borg spoke in an amused tone. He was clearly enjoying this situation.

Gia felt disgusted, but with her iceberg-like self-control, she hid that emotion. You could say that it’s the only positive influence that came from dealing with the Earl’s bad hobby.

**“If I’m not around, then even the Mage Tower will be troubled.”**

**“I know. I know, you know? That’s right, Azure Rose. If you disappear now, then both the Mage Tower and His Honor Rio will be troubled. Sir Jaho Azum…… well, I’m not sure about him. In any case, if I were to make my VIPs troubled, then I’d have to give up on doing business. However…… that’s right, the thing I’m talking about is, if I take care of your side, then there’s a need for you to show a little sincerity as well.”**

Borg then shoved his hand into the mouth of the demonic dog he was sitting on top of and felt around its empty mouth. He then took out his saliva covered fingers and obscenely rubbed them together while grinning.



⟨I’m just going to ask selflessly, but how far can you go?⟩

⟨What do you mean?⟩

Gia asked in a nitpicking tone. Since it was a response that could only be seen in people who knew exactly what was said, Yujin waited without giving any further explanation.

He didn’t have to wait long.

⟨……Borg is a vulgar and indecent man. He’s also a person that doesn’t let a person’s weakness out of his grasp and digs into it like a demonic dog.⟩ Gia

recalled the pet she'd see every time she went to meet Borg. 〈He'll most certainly request for something shameful.〉

〈Then it'd be difficult to resolve it with money, huh.〉

I had a rough outline of what type of man Borg was. If he receives money, then everything would be over after an equal transaction, however, if he receives psychological damage even once, then it's possible to maintain that advantageous position. If you implant into him the feeling of submission, then afterward, it's possible to suck out as much money as you want from him.

〈Of course, if it's for Her Excellency the Earl, then I can do anything. I can endure something like a little shame.〉

Gia Batsand spoke with a face that appeared as if she were chewing on a spider. She did her best to ignore the certainty that the amount of shame actually won't be small. Although the path will definitely be long and painful, the Azure Rose Knight believed, within her exhaustion, that this path may perhaps be the appropriate atonement process for having deceived the Earl of the Silver Lion until now.

〈You don't have to do that.〉

Yujin told her. This man referred to as Borg, is certainly a bad type of person with the worst quality, befitting his status as an executive among an organization of thieves. However, at the same time, he's also the easiest type of person for Yujin to deal with.

〈Tell him this.〉



Gia spoke as thus.

**“I am a knight. There is something more important than my life.”**

**“They say that the Earl of the Silver Lion is quite the decent**

**torturer. Didn't she steam 'some guy' to death last time? If you're able to say the same thing while going through that kind of torture, then I'd have nothing more to say."**

Borg had mentioned that incident purely with the intention to tease Gia, but without being shaken, Gia nodded her head.

**"That's correct. I will most likely be unable to keep my mouth shut."**

Gia looked straight at Borg. Her blue pupils were aimed at him like an icicle within a cave on a snowy mountain.

**"Within that heated torture, I will end up confessing that I was receiving orders from the Mage Tower. Starting from Touma Soh's name, I'll end up saying a countless number of other names. And among those, yours will be squeezed in with them, Borg. As you mentioned, she's someone who steamed to death 'some guy'. She's an individual who's trying to kill the person who was her right hand since a young age, and was also the daughter of her nanny, solely because I messed things up. How do you think that individual would behave if she were to find out that she was being treated as a fool?"**

Similar to the winter wind blowing through a canyon, Gia's voice bleakly and deeply burrowed into Borg's ear.

**"You should know well since you're an executive of the Black Dragon Street. Thanks to the Earl's ability, she doesn't have to go and find her assassination target. She doesn't have to send you people a request, either. All she has to do is place down as many traps as possible, comfortably sit back, and summon her target right in front of her. As you've said yourself, the Earl of the Silver Lion is quite the decent torturer. The best possible situation for an assassination target is probably being instantly killed by a trap the moment they're summoned. However, that kind of luck doesn't happen often."**

The demonic dog that Borg was seated on top of started to whine. It was because Borg's fingers had curved inwards like a hook and were tearing into

the dog's skin. Borg already knew that the Earl of the Silver Lion had received several accusations of assassinations. It'd be safe to say that the reason why the security unit of the Twelve Zodiacs royal family moved around within the City of Confinement before wasn't because the Earl of the Silver Lion tortured prisoners who were on death row, but rather, it was because they wanted to dig up those assassination accusations. Albeit, they were unable to find anything.....

**“If you do something like that, then wouldn't that be admitting the fact that you've been betraying the Silver Lion Earl since the very beginning? You'll die for certain. You could just bow your head once here and-.”**

**“Did you not hear what I said a second ago? I'll die regardless.”**

**“So you're saying that you'll take me down with you?”**

**“That's if you don't do me a favor.”**

The demonic dog whined once more, but not for long. Struck by fear, the dog shut its mouth. The Black Dragon Street executive, who had received the title of Lunar Scorpion, had an angered look on his face.

In contrast to the demonic dog, Gia Batsand didn't cower before that rage. Rather, she took a step closer to that angered Borg.

**“Borg, I will tell you what you have to do. As I said before, you will make the evidence that the Fedchants had forged the documents. You will then obediently keep your mouth shut as you wait for the Earl to fall into a trap through means that aren't attributable to me. During that process, in my stead, you will deal with the complaints that could possibly come from the Mage Tower and the Fedchant. You will do that for me purely because of your goodwill. Is that not so, Borg Edentras?”**

**“You crazy bitch.”**

Borg spat out. However, there was acceptance mixed in with that curse.

Although the desire to let out a sigh of relief was piled up like a mountain,

Gia was able to suppress that desire with her iceberg-like self-control.

**“If one’s life is at risk, then anyone would go crazy.”**

**“People as insane as you aren’t common. Certainly, like master like servant.”**

Borg was unable to hide his dismay as he spoke. Although his words just now were an insult towards the Earl she served, the female knight before him was already an individual who had betrayed that lord. It was obvious that she wouldn’t even snort if someone insulted her lord. How could he have fumbled like this?

The ironic thing was that Gia actually did receive damage from that insult. If she lacked even a slight bit of her self-control, then her ice plate-like expression would have cracked. Fortunately, she possessed a lot of self-control.

Excessively so. Gia, who recalled that development process, felt the afterglow of the small victory she had just achieved disappear in a blink of an eye.

And exhaustion washed over her.



“Did it not turn out well?”

In the basement of the Silver Lion Castle, Yujin asked. Gia tilted her head.

“Why do you think that?”

“Since your expression is a bit dark.”

“.....” Gia felt her own face. It was the same as usual. “Now that I think about it, Yujin, how are you able to read my face?”

“? I’m able to read it since you make a facial expression.”

Gia felt her face once more, but as she expected, she wasn't able to understand that well. Although the assumption that he was able to grasp her facial expression through a different method because he was an otherworlder came to mind, when she recalled the fact that Ahyeon wasn't able to read her expression one bit in the past, she figured that it was just Yujin's own ability.

"It ended well." Gia shook her head and continued. "How did you know that everything would end up like this?"

"Obviously, there's no way that a guy, who pulls out the teeth and nails of his pet, wouldn't be a coward, right?"

Yujin added that he knew someone similar to Borg back on Earth. Those people appear dangerous at first, but it's a tendency that often occurs among wild animals as well. Like a plant that decorates itself in order to appear as if they're poisonous, they're no different to a dog that barks noisily.

"Those type of guys are only dangerous to the people who they're certain won't bite back. If you're able to make them fear the fact that they could possibly be bitten, then they'll shrink away on their own."

".....I never thought of it like that."

"That's because I'm older than you."

Gia giggled. Her own age was 18 and Yujin's age was 19, however, as much as their two worlds' times were different, their actual ages were that much the same. Yujin shrugged his shoulders as if he were admitting that what he said was a silly joke.

"In any case, if it ended well then what's with the face?"

Gia folded her arms.

"It's nothing. It's just that something to think about came up....."

"Something to think about?"

"It's unrelated to you."



“It’s related.” Han Yujin spoke as if it were an obvious fact. “You’re my sword, after all.”

Those words made Gia’s stubborn attitude falter for a moment. Gia Batsand-as much as she could feel it herself this time-gazed at the otherworlder boy with wavering eyes. The boy who possessed a cunning and keen enough intelligence to accurately grasp the true nature of a Black Dragon Street executive, despite having never seen him before, would say completely unexpected words that were capable of digging into her mind like this.

“.....It’s just that, I still remember the words Borg said before I left.”

“What did he say?”

“He said it’d be a good idea to make Her Excellency the Earl fall into a trap as soon as possible. That he’d send a letter if I didn’t do so. A letter saying that I’ve been deceiving Her Excellency and have been moving under the Mage Tower’s commands. If I don’t want to meet a terrible fate, then I should quickly strike the Earl’s back.”

Yujin thought about those words.

He tilted his head.

“Does he think something like that would work as a threat?”

“Well, if Borg was really that afraid of the thought of being dragged down with me, I figured that sending a letter was just empty words. Regardless, if we do end up fighting with the Mage Tower in the future, if a mage from the Mage Tower reveals that I had betrayed the Earl.”

Yujin tried playing a simulation of what was said just now in his head. In the future, while working for the Earl, the enemy(Moderate Mage A of the Mage Tower) says to the Earl, ‘Fufufu. There was a time thy servant was actually our informant.’, presume a situation where they say something like that were to occur. The Earl is taken aback. Gia flinches. I make a bitter expression. Companion A(There’s a chance I may have one at that time) is shocked. Well, something like that.

As expected, I tilted my head.

“No…… Gia.”

“What is it, Yujin?”

“You, what did you say when I said that I’d reveal your identity to the Earl?”

Gia Batsand boldly stuck out her chest.

“I said that rather than believing someone like you, she’d believe the words spoken by me who’s like a sibling to her.”

“…….”

“…….”

“…….”

“……I’m sorry.”

“It’s fine. If something like that does happen, then I’ll take your side and say ‘the Mage Tower you despise is just trying to alienate you from your most cherished subordinate.’.”

Gia hugged her head. She wanted to say ‘No, but.’. She wanted to say ‘What I mean is, that.’. but in the end, after being unable to say anything, she dropped her shoulders and gazed at Yujin.

“Why is it that whenever I talk with you, everything becomes a simple problem!?”

Yujin had an expression on his face that said that it was troubling if she were to suddenly get upset like that.

“Well, that’s because you’re contemplating simple problems…….”

“They aren’t simple! Everything I’ve been wracking my brain over was complicated.”

“For example?”

Gia wanted to bring up the negotiation with Borg as an example. However, damn it, didn't Yujin resolve that easily? All things considered, he's a person who was able to easily get over the life-threatening situation of being summoned from another world and tortured to death. Gia felt a deep wave of exhaustion wash over her once more.

The exhaustion.

"I, betrayed Her Excellency the Earl."

Gia rubbed her eyes. They were tired eyes.

"We were able to take care of this incident well, but, in the end, no matter what excuse I make, no matter what I try to say, no matter how much I try to play innocent, in the end, I still betrayed Her Excellency. You could say that Borg, that damn Lunar Scorpion, had unintentionally stabbed a venom into my heart. Similar to how poison leaves a mark, the original sin will remain in my mind."

"If that's the case, then."

And then, Yujin even made that into a simple problem.

"Neutralize the poison and atone for it."

Gia stared at Yujin with a speechless expression on her face. There wasn't anything like a smile drifting on Yujin's lips. At all times, he spoke boldly and in a serious tone.

"In order for you to be able to do that, I'll help you."

There still wasn't even a fragment of a smile on Yujin's lips. It was similar to her own expression of indifference. But it was different. Because of that faint difference, the edge of Gia's mouth twitched.

"Yujin."

Yujin nodded.

Following after, the ice melted and, as if it were rising up from below, a smile drifted up on Gia's lips. She then approached Yujin and hugged him.

Yujin wordlessly returned her hug and patted her back.

For a long time, the female knight with the title of Azure Rose rested her head on the shoulder of an otherworlder boy.

**Fin.**

## Footnotes

1. [\[↑\]](#) Gap as in, [‘gap moe’](#).



To the individuals who are reading this for the first time, and to the people who have read this since before, hello, this is Ryu Saerin.

Although there was a long period of complications, I was able to show off Your and My Asylum in a book form before you readers. In a contest

..... A visual novel version..... Ugh, my head.....

I wanted to write a story about people who were broken somewhere and lacking something.

I wanted to write a story about characters filling up the places that the other lacked, and supporting each other like that. A story that I can love completely. I wanted to write a story that I could write best.

On the other hand, I also wanted to portray a beautiful girl.

I wanted to portray a girl who does as she desires, is crawling with unpredictability, behaves cruelly, and someone, who, despite being like that, has common sense in certain places and for some reason uses informal speech. A character that I can love completely. I wanted to portray a child that I believed to be the 'prettiest'.

Once more, on the other hand, I also wondered what would happen if I gave the role of the protagonist to a character who wasn't the 'prettiest', but the 'coolest'.

This is something I've written in the afterword of the serialized web novel version of the story, but, as Ryu Saerin, this is the first time in a long time that I've made a male as the main character in my stories. As much as how there's no way that my story would work out well if I made a male character, whom I thought was the prettiest, the protagonist, that's why I wanted to give a child, who I thought was the most splendid, the role as the main character.

The story that I can write the best, with a heroine that I think is the prettiest, while establishing a boy who I think is the coolest as the protagonist.

In short, Your and My Asylum, is that kind of story.

As always, I end up reflecting on myself.

This story was first written early 2011. That's nearly 4 and a half years ago. As that time passed, I noticed these and those poor portions of the story. I did my best to fix them as much as possible, but it's true that it's embarrassing.

If you ask what's embarrassing, then, rather than shameful sentences, it was the modeling of the story about the protagonist and heroine, which I mentioned earlier, that was shameful. In the protagonist's case especially, I designed Yujin with the feeling of What\_I\_Think\_Is\_The\_Perfect\_Protagonist.JPG. However, when I looked back through the story after time had passed, there were these unexpected places that I broke on purpose while writing, and I could also see flaws here and there.

Of course, I'm not a perfect human and I'm not a completed upright person, either. Regardless, I tried to portray a perfect human, a perfect upright person. If that's the case, then I had the need to overcome the visual limitations and political self-regulations that I possessed, but I was unable to do so.

I'm reflecting in various meanings.

Despite all that, I'm delighted.

The thing I felt while I was reading through once more and fixing *Your* and *My Asylum*, was that I really do love this story. I love the Silver Lion Earl, Gia, and Yujin.

I'm pleased to be able to show this story to you all.

If you were, perhaps, satisfied by this story, then whenever you're given the opportunity, I'd be grateful if you picked up one of my previous works, as well.

The light novels are 'The World After the Ending' and the main story of 'Sword Girls'. If there's someone here waiting for the next volume of 'The World After the Ending' I'll borrow this page to apologize sincerely. Please wait a little bit longer.



I'll see you all whenever the opportunity presents itself again.

Have a nice day.

# Silver Lion Earl



Race: Otherworlder

Gender: Female

Age: 16

Stamina: Below Average

Technique: Average

Intelligence: High

Wisdom: Average

Charm: Above Average

Abnormalness: Very High

## Titles

[Rare] Earl (Present Head of the Silver Lion House)

[Rare] Silver Lion

[Unique] Universal Summoner (First Barrier of the Twelve Sky Barriers)

## Inventory

[Rare] House of the Lion's Coat (1/Day, makes the wearer and the clothes clean)

[Rare] House of the Cat's Belt (1/Day, puts the wearer into a state of hunger)

[Uncommon] Kneesocks of Earth (Does not wash)

[Rare] Twin Headed Snake's Whip, Lartegias (Living whip. Usually left in the armory)

[Rare] 10 Rings (Small Prince, Mischief, Unknown Archbishop, Black Haired Virgin Goddess, Knight of Chains, Gardener of a Crazy Goddess, Colorless Dragon King, Silver Dust, Sky's Fortune, The Past Resident of the Universe)

[Rare] 2 Bracelets (World Tree of Machines, Living Performers)

[Rare] Various Magical Gems (Slight bonus towards various physical abilities)

[Rare] Various Gems (Expensive)

## Skills

[Unique] Summoning (12/Month, summon something. Can summon the exact target if a piece of their life is in the ability user's possession.)

[Unique] Summon Cancel (Send the summoned being back to its original location)

[Common] Torture (It's a secret that her handiwork level is that of an amateur)



# Gia Batsand



Race: Otherworlder

Gender: Female

Age: 18

Stamina: High

Technique: High

Intelligence: Average

Wisdom: Average

Charm: Average

Abnormalness: Very High

## Titles

[Uncommon] Knight (*Silver Lion Royal Guard*)

[Rare] Azure Rose

[Rare] Amethyst Swamp's Disciple

## Inventory

[Uncommon] Sword of the Silver Lion Royal Guard (*It's sharp*)

[Rare] Silver Lion Royal Guard Uniform (*Slight bonus towards various physical abilities. Although it's a uniform, Gia is the only one who wears it*)

[Uncommon] Stockings of Earth (*Wears occasionally*)

## Skills

[Rare] Great Rending Slice (*3-5/Day, a slash with the ability to slice absolutely anything*)

[Rare] Swordsmanship (*Expert level*)

[Uncommon] Drawing (*Proficient at drawing head portraits*)



# Han Yujin



Race: Earthling

Gender: Male

Age: 19

Stamina: Average

Technique: Very High

Intelligence: Very High

Wisdom: Very High

Charm: Average

Abnormalness: Very High

## Titles

[Rare] Samwon High School Student Body President

[Uncommon] Otherworldly Boy

## Inventory

[Common] Smartphone

[Unique] Prayer Beads Gifted by Minhee

[Common] Glasses *(Does not have currently)*

## Skills

[Rare] Stable Mind *(Can maintain composure whenever and wherever he's at)*

[Rare] Various Knowledge

[Rare] Mutual Respect *(An ability that's very difficult to find in the world)*



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